

MODERN LANGUAGE QUARTERLY

March, 1955

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CHAUCEUR AND THE MEDIEVAL MILLER

By GEORGE FENWICK JONES

Chaucer's masterpiece, *The Canterbury Tales*, is often labeled a true picture of fourteenth-century English life, and its miller is considered realistically drawn. For example, Miss Muriel Bowden says that Chaucer described his miller "with engaging realism,"¹ and J. M. Manly maintains that "we may perhaps include the Miller also among the figures drawn from life."² On the other hand some critics, including Frederick Tupper and Kemp Malone, oppose this realistic interpretation of *The Canterbury Tales*; but they do not devote much space to the problem of the miller.³ The purpose of this paper is to add a bit more evidence against the realistic interpretation of the poem and to reveal Chaucer's reason for describing his miller as he did. It will show that he did not intend to describe any particular miller, but rather to create a character embodying certain characteristics popularly attributed to the millers as a class. Even though his miller has many individual traits and a convincing personality, he nevertheless conforms to the medieval concept of what a miller should be. Among other things, he is red-haired, coarse-featured, socially ambitious, muscular, well-armed, vulgar, drunken, stupid, and dishonest; and he associates with the reeve. As we shall see, all of these qualities were commonly ascribed to the millers in late-medieval literature.

One may object that many of the sources cited below are too far distant from Chaucer in both space and time, since many of them stem from fifteenth-century Germany. However, this objection is less valid than it may first appear; for space did not prevent all cultural exchange, and time did not destroy all literary continuity. Travel between England and Germany was not unusual in Chaucer's day; in fact, his Wife of Bath had visited "Coloigne,"⁴ and his Knight must have passed through Germany on his way to "Pruce" (*C.T.*, A 53). Even more important, the Latin language still served as an effective medium for the international exchange of ideas, and French was be-

¹ *Commentary on the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales* (New York, 1948), p. 246. Cf.: "These men and women are presented as they actually were on that April day in 1387" (p. 26). S. Robertson (*JEGP*, XIV [1915], 226) says, "it is hardly fair to the fourteenth century to say that it is only the Reeve and the Miller who give realistic pictures of its life." This realistic interpretation is still championed by Edward A. Block in his article, "Chaucer's Millers and Their Bagpipes," *Speculum*, XXIX (1954), 239-43, which appeared some time after the present article was contributed. His article begins, "Of all the various pilgrims who appear in the General Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales* few, if any, are more realistically and vividly portrayed than the thick set, brawny, rascally miller."

² *Some New Light on Chaucer* (New York, 1926), p. 95.

³ F. Tupper, "The Quarrels of the Canterbury Pilgrims," *JEGP*, XIV (1915), 256-70; for miller, pp. 265-70. K. Malone, *Chapters on Chaucer* (Baltimore, 1951), pp. 144-235; for miller, pp. 199-202.

⁴ *Poetical Works of Chaucer*, ed. F. N. Robinson (Boston, 1933), A 466.

ginning to serve the same purpose. Nor did passage of time drastically alter literary motifs, because, in view of medieval man's respect for authority and faith in a static order, a fifteenth-century author may well have used an older source than that used by a fourteenth-century one. No direct connection is claimed between *The Canterbury Tales* and these foreign sources; it is merely emphasized that they were all rooted in a common Western European cultural tradition. It would be asking too much of chance to believe their similarities due purely to coincidence.

Concerning Robyn, the miller of the Canterbury pilgrimage, Chaucer says, "His berd as any sowe or fox was reed" (C.T., A 552). It is unlikely that Chaucer chose this color after personally observing a particular miller, since red-headed millers were a literary commonplace. For example, a popular German song of a somewhat later period tells us:

De möller hefft einen roden bart
darto is he van böser art.⁵

The miller has a red beard, and
he is also of a wicked nature.

It is most improbable that the author of this song had made a careful study of millers' beards, since medieval man tended to accept authority rather than personal experience. Because the miller's beard was traditionally red, an author was expected to describe it that way even if the millers he knew had black, brown, blond, grey, or white beards. The rime-pair in the above couplet had already appeared in the *Devil's Net*, a rather misanthropic monastic poem from fifteenth-century Switzerland:

Judas was och der selben art
Nidig, hässig, mit rotem bart.⁶

Judas was also of the same kind,
envious, hateful, with a red beard.

This would suggest that the millers in literature received their red beards as symbols of greed and wickedness. The prejudice against red hair must have been quite old, for in the eleventh-century German poem *Ruodlieb* the first bit of advice given to the hero is, "Non tibi sit rufus umquam specialis amicus"⁷ (Never let a redhead be your close friend); and the hero's red-haired companion well proves the rule. Another medieval proverb stated, "Sub barba rufa est cor cum

⁵ L. Uhland, *Alte hoch- und niederdeutsche Volkslieder* (Stuttgart, 1891 ff.), II, 86, vv. 10 ff.

⁶ *Des Teufels Netz*, ed. K. A. Barack, Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, LXX (Stuttgart, 1863), vv. 388-89. Cf. "Rotbart nie gut ward" and "Roter Bart, untreue Art." R. Koegel, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur* (Strassburg, 1897), I, 366, doubts that this prejudice was native to the Germanic peoples, among whom red hair was so prevalent. For handicap of having red hair, see *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, ed. A. v. Arnim and C. Brentano (Heidelberg, 1806 ff.; reprint Leipzig, 1910), II, 396. According to G. Queri, *Bauernerotik und Bauernsehne in Oberbayern* (München, 1911), p. 48, red-headed girls were scorned in Bavaria.

⁷ F. Seiler, ed. (Halle, 1882), V, 451.

⁸ Kindly called to my attention by Dr. Adriaan Barnouw of Columbia University.

trufa"⁸ (Under a red beard is a deceitful heart). Perhaps such an a priori prejudice explains why the German Emperor Otto II (the Red) was remembered as a wicked monarch.⁹ Red hair was traditional with German villains from Loki to Franz Moor; in fact, Nestroy's Titus Feuerfuchs seems to have been about the first redhead to win more sympathy than hate. This prejudice obtained in England fully a century before Chaucer, as we see in the thirteenth-century version of the *Proverbs of Alfred*:

Pe rede mon he is a quede,
for he wole þe þin iwil rede;
he is cocker, þef and horeling,
scolde, of wrechedome he is king.¹⁰

This passage is of particular interest, since Chaucer's miller was also a thief, lecher, bully, and mischief maker. I use the singular "miller," although there are two millers in the poem, because, as Manly observes, the reeve "obviously makes the miller of his tale a twin brother of the Miller of the pilgrim group."¹¹ Robyn was a "janglere" who loved "harlotries" (*C.T.*, A 560 ff.). This has an interesting parallel in *Piers Plowman* (B, X, 30-44), where the words "tangelers," "harlotrye," and "mylnere" appear in close proximity. This may suggest some mental association between the words, or it may suggest that Chaucer was influenced by some moralistic source in describing his miller. Three of Robyn's red hairs protrude from a wart on his nose (*C.T.*, A 555), the wart being another conventional symbol of lechery.¹² The prejudice against red hair was still current in the fifteenth century, as we see in the Middle English *Secreta Secretorum*, which says: "Tho that bene rede men, bene Parceuyngne and trechurus, and full of queyntise, i-likenyd to Foxis."¹³ As we have seen, Chaucer made Robyn's beard as red as a fox.

In addition to his red hair, Chaucer's miller also has the vulgar features, obscene behavior, and social ambition often attributed to his professional group. To understand his social status, we should consider the history of his calling. The ancient Teutons had no professional millers; each household ground enough grain for its own needs with a hand mill.¹⁴ Through contact with the Romans, they acquired the art of grinding with mills driven by man, beast, or water power.¹⁵

⁸ Cf.: "er hete roetelehtez hār / und was mit alle ein übel man," "Der keiser übel unde rot." *Erzählungen und Schwänke*, ed. H. Lambel (Leipzig, 1883), p. 259, vv. 8-9; p. 266, v. 299.

⁹ *Old English Miscellany*, ed. R. Morris, EETS, O.S., XLIX (1872), p. 138, vv. 702 ff. Cf. "harlotrye and horedome" in *Piers Plowman*, ed. W. Skeat (Oxford, 1886), B, XIII, 354.

¹¹ J. Manly, *Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer (New York, 1928), p. 561.

¹² W. C. Curry, *Chaucer and the Medieval Sciences* (New York, 1926), pp. 88 ff.

¹³ R. Steele, ed., EETS, E.S., LXXIV (1898), I, 229, vv. 19 ff.

¹⁴ Note that OHG *quirn*, *quern*, *kurn*, Gothic *quirnus* is Germanic, whereas *mill* and its cognates are from Latin *molina*.

¹⁵ For history of milling, see C. Koehne, *Das Recht der Mühlen bis zum Ende der Karolinger Zeit* (Breslau, 1904), pp. 5 ff.

When milling became a specialized industry, they followed the Romans' precedent and relegated it to the serfs;¹⁶ so it quite naturally fell into social disrepute. This helps explain why the miller was so often portrayed with the physical traits usually attributed to the serfs, a convention which lingered even after most millers had become free. Chaucer follows this tradition by giving "blake . . . and wyde . . . noethirles" to Robyn and a round face and "camus" nose to Symkyn, the miller in the reeve's story.¹⁷ Flat broad noses had been associated with the lower classes for centuries, perhaps because of original differences in race.¹⁸ The miller's proverbially ugly face is depicted in a fifteenth-century drawing by the German artist Martin Schongauer.¹⁹

One might ask why equal scorn was not heaped upon the other trades and crafts originally performed by serfs. The answer is that the miller was in a good position to acquire wealth and thereby rise above his station, since wealth and social position were so nearly synonymous in the Middle Ages.²⁰ Because most laborers never threatened to compete with the propertied classes, it was not necessary to ridicule their ambition. The miller, on the other hand, had money to spend and was better able to overstep the barriers which had gradually developed between the classes. One of the chief social barriers of the time was dress,²¹ and that helps explain why Robyn wears a "blew hood" and Symkyn wears red hose (*C.T.*, A 564, 3955). Blue hats and brightly colored hose were theoretically illegal for the lower classes and therefore served as favorite items of clothing satire.²² Most medieval writers reserved this type of satire for the arrogant peasantry; but Chaucer spared his plowman, who is the imaginary ideal of how a good peasant should be, or perhaps, as D. W. Robertson suggests, an allegorical symbol of the apostolic life. Instead he assigned his clothing satire to the miller, who is also representative of the lower orders. In addition to his presumptuous clothing, Symkyn also has pride of family; so "to saven his estaat of yomanrye" he marries the parson's bastard daughter (*C.T.*, A 3942 ff.). This lady, who is so

¹⁶ Koehne, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

¹⁷ *C.T.*, A 557, 3934. The hideous peasant in *Aucassin et Nicolette*, ed. F. Bourdillon (Manchester, 1919), p. 31, v. 17, has "un grandisme nés plat, et uns grans narines lées."

¹⁸ The ancient Teutons probably associated non-Germanic features with conquered and therefore servile populations.

¹⁹ A. Schultz, *Das deutsche Leben im XIV. und XV. Jahrhundert*, Familienausgabe (Wien, 1892), fig. 189.

²⁰ In early Germanic society all freemen had the same rights. Nobility was due to the ownership of allodial property (cf. OHG *uodal* and NHG *Adel*). This relationship still held, in theory at least, as late as 1300; for, in his *Renner* vv. 1407-09), Hugo of Trimberg says, "Ein fri gebür ist herren genöz; Alein er si des guotes blöz, Doch ist er von gebürte fri." G. Ehrismann, ed., BLVS, CCXLVII (Tübingen, 1908).

²¹ For clothing satire, see George F. Jones, *Realism and Social Satire in Heinrich Wittenwiler's Ring*, Columbia diss., Univ. Microfilms (Ann Arbor, 1950), No. 1864, pp. 103 ff.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 105 ff.

haughty that "Ther dorste no wight clepen hire but 'dame'" (C.T., A 3956), has a counterpart in a German song about a proud miller-wife who thought herself courtly and clever.²⁵ Two and a half centuries after Chaucer, the German satirist Hans Moscherosch ridiculed the millers' craving for social recognition by telling how they wished to be called "Junckern von der Mühlen."²⁶

As long as millers were serfs, they were prohibited from carrying arms, that being the privilege of freemen. Like the Jews and the peasants, they were expected to depend upon the protection of their ruler.²⁷ Consequently, even after they escaped their unfree status, they were sometimes prevented from bearing weapons; for example, a municipal law in Munich prohibited millers from entering taverns armed.²⁸ In view of such laws, we can understand Chaucer's humor in letting Robyn bear a "swerd and bokeler . . . by his syde" (C.T., A 558). Likewise, he says of Symkyn:

Ay by his belt he baar a long panade,
And of a swerd ful trenchant was the blade.
A joly poppere baar he in his pouche;
Ther was no man, for peril, dorste hym touche.
A Sheffield thwitel baar he in his hose.²⁷

In Heinrich Wittenwiler's *Ring*, which appeared in Switzerland a half-century later, the peasant brawl develops into a fatal fight when one of the contestants borrows a spear from the miller.²⁸

In view of the miller's practice of carrying weapons, it is not surprising that Symkyn is a "perilous man," as young Clerk John tells us (C.T., A 4189). Before gunpowder made all men the same size, a dangerous man was usually large and muscular, and millers in literature often fit this description. Concerning Robyn, Chaucer says:

The Millere was a stout carl for the nones;
Ful byg he was of brawn, and eek of bones.
(C.T., A 545-46)

Interesting parallels can be found in two somewhat later Middle Scots poems edited by George Chalmers,²⁹ who believed them written by the Scottish kings James I and VI. In "Pebelis to the Play," a village dancer named Will Swane is a "meikle miller man" (p. 114), and in "Christis Kirk on the Green"

²⁵ F. M. Böhme, *Altdeutsches Liederbuch* (Leipzig, 1877), No. 44.

²⁶ *Gesichte Philanders von Sittewald*, ed. F. Bobertag, Deutsche National-Litteratur, ed. J. Kürschner, XXXII (Berlin and Stuttgart, n.d.), 40.

²⁷ Koehne, *op. cit.*, pp. 33 ff. For ancient Bavarian law protecting millers, see *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, Legum, II, 599.

²⁸ O. Böckel, *Deutsche Volkslieder aus Oberhessen* (Marburg, 1885), p. xxvi.

²⁷ C.T., A 3929 ff. Note that Chaucer's "yeman" bears similar arms (C.T., A 112 ff.). Although he too is of simple birth, his arms are not comical because he is in the employ of a gentleman.

²⁸ E. Wiessner, ed. (Leipzig, 1931), vv. 6531 ff.

²⁹ *Poetic Remains of Some of the Scottish Kings* (London, 1824), pp. 107 ff.

The miller was of manly mak,
 To meet him was no mowis [jest?];
 Their durst not ten come him to tak,
 So nowit he their nowis [hit them on their heads?].
 (pp. 167-68)

Noting the similarity with Chaucer's big miller whom no one dared to touch, Chalmers says, "The pictures of the two millers are so much alike, that the Scottish king must have seen the portraiture of the English poet" (p. 168). This may have been the case; but it is also possible that both were influenced by traditional subliterary humor.

Perhaps the millers of Munich could not enter the taverns armed because of their proverbial drunkenness, a vice naturally charged against a low-class group with much spending money. It is no coincidence that Robyn is the only one in our group who is "for dronken" (*C.T.*, A 3120) when the pilgrims leave the tavern at Southwerk. In Hans Sachs' poem, "The Peasant Dance," the miller is the greatest indulger.⁸⁰ A contemporary German tale tells of a miller who drinks himself into a stupor in a tavern and is cuckolded by a priest,⁸¹ and Symkyn too is drunk when he is cuckolded by the cleric (*C.T.*, A 4162). Since cuckolds were the most scorned of fools, we see that the miller also represented stupidity and folly. This is corroborated in *The Canterbury Tales* when the host calls Robyn a fool (*C.T.*, A 3135). Hans Sachs also describes the miller as a fool on two occasions: in one of his poems a miller tells how he has spared the rod and spoiled his asses so badly that now they ridicule him and make him carry his sacks to the mill; and another poem tells how a miserly miller is robbed by thieves who impersonate Christ and His disciples (pp. 497 ff., 475 ff.). Adalbert von Keller records a German tale of that era about a stupid miller who thinks he has been pregnant and given birth to a swallow (pp. 463 ff.). According to Miss Bowden, a passage in *Piers Plowman* may reveal the miller "as an ignorant rascal" (p. 246); but, as we shall see, it more probably alludes to his greed. Although Chaucer lets his miller play the fool, he nevertheless gives him red hair, the traditional symbol of cunning (cf. *queyntise*, above).

Whereas people were free to consider the miller clever or foolish, or even both, almost everyone agreed in believing him dishonest. The reason for this accusation is evident if we read between the lines of the following paragraph from the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*:

Most of the mills, however, were erected by the lords of the manors and were leased to the millers usually on the basis of annual payments; these constituted a considerable part of the noblemen's revenue. Mediaeval records indicate that the tolls were often very burdensome. In the thirteenth century both townspeople

⁸⁰ "Von Potenstein der Esels miller / Der war am dysch der gröste Füller." *Sämtliche Fabeln und Schwänke von Hans Sachs*, ed. E. Goetze (Halle, 1893), I, 5, vv. 73-74.

⁸¹ Adalbert von Keller, *Erzählungen aus altheutschen Handschriften*, BLVS, XXXV (Stuttgart, 1855), 260 ff.

and peasants began to use hand mills openly, in spite of fines, confiscation of mills and even excommunication. Generally, however, the lords succeeded in keeping their privileges until the abolition of the feudal dues. The millers were too scattered to form guilds; but because of the indispensability of their product they were closely regulated by the lords or by the town government. In general, regulation was designed to fix the tolls, insure accurate weights and measures and prevent adulteration. (ed. 1933, X, 484)

Here we find three particularly pertinent points: (1) the mills were owned by the lords and operated for them by the millers; (2) the tolls were so burdensome that people tried to evade them; (3) tolls and weights were not adequately standardized. The three conditions were ideal for making people suspect the millers. Because the peasants were required to take their grain to their lord's mill regardless of the treatment they received there, the millers feared no competition and felt little incentive to render good service. Consequently the peasants resented the multure, or toll, which the miller exacted. *Piers Plowman* (B, X, 44) seems to allude to the multure, or *multa* as it was sometimes called, by saying that "Munde þe mylnere" knows nothing but *multa fecit deus*. Because the millers were too scattered to form guilds, they could not protect their rights or their reputations as well as the better organized professions. Millers in Germany were legally "dishonorable," that is to say they were denied many benefits of the law and their taint was transmitted to their children, regardless of their personal merits.³² Therefore the sons of millers had to take up milling or some equally dishonorable profession. It is no coincidence that Symkyn married the parson's daughter, because priests' children were also classified as dishonorable. According to the *Sachsenspiegel* (III, 45, 9), they could avenge themselves only on the shadow of a man; and, according to the *Schwabenspiegel* (358, 5), their blood-money was equal to only as much hay as a two-year-old ox could pull.

Literary works occasionally mention the peasants' obligation to take their grain to a certain mill; for example, Symkyn could take "greet sokene [toll] . . . of . . . al the land aboute" (C.T., A 3987-88). A sixteenth-century German story-book called *Wendunmuth* tells of a miller who fails in business and asks alms of a baker. The miller tells him that he used to have seven *malgest* (customers), and the baker expresses surprise that he should beg after having had seven peasants obliged to him.³³ He then says that he was once a miller and that forty peasants had had to grind at his mill. The English poet John Lydgate also lampooned these two professions in his satire "Against Millers and Bakers," in which he urged them to form a guild.³⁴

Although the feudal lords got the lion's share of the mill toll, the peasants' resentment was largely diverted to their millers, for strawbosses generally bear the brunt of their underlings' hate. This was also

³² O. Beneke, *Von unehrlichen Leuten* (Hamburg, 1863), pp. 1 ff.

³³ "hastu sieben bawen zu deiner mülen gehörig gehabt und bettelst?" H. Österley, ed., BLVS, XCV (Tübingen, 1869), I, 333.

³⁴ *Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, ed. H. N. MacCracken, Part II, EETS, O.S., No. 192 (1934), p. 2448.

true of the reeve, who, as Professor Tupper has shown (p. 265), served as supervisor of the manor and could therefore rob both his master and the peasants. Consequently the miller and the reeve became associated in popular fancy.³⁵ Having numerous professional contacts, they naturally had conflicts; so, as Tupper observes, the "strife between the Reeve and the Miller is thoroughly traditional" (p. 265). Here too we see that Chaucer was conforming to tradition when he let his miller squabble with the reeve.

Because of his strategic position, the miller was often accused of theft. Of all the medieval works I have found mentioning him, only two try to defend him. One of these is the *Schachzabelbuch*, a long allegorical "Chess-Book" by the Swiss monk Conrad of Ammenhausen, which appeared about half a century before *The Canterbury Tales*. Conrad, whose chessmen represent the various social and professional components of society, states that millers are seldom trusted. However, unlike most of his contemporaries, he makes allowance for some honest ones:

Swie man mengen biderben müller siht
man vint ouch mengen bösen wiht,
der den biderben schaden tuot
an ir lob; doch ist niht guot
swer si gemeinlich alle
in ernste oder in schalle
wil dieben. des tuon ich niht hie:
ich zelle nûwen ze dieben die,
die stelent, und die biderben niht.³⁶

However many honest millers one sees, one also finds many a wicked rascal who hurts the reputation of the honest ones; yet it is not good for anyone to call them all thieves, either seriously or in fun. I won't do that here: I shall call thieves only those who steal and not those who are honest.

In order to help his readers guard against such trickery, he tells an anecdote about a dishonest miller who steals the oil he has ground from some nuts. A somewhat later poem even justifies the miller's purportedly outrageous fees:

Wo kûmets dat nu vel möllers so stelen
und seggen se hebbent so klein
gemalen?
dat wil ick juw wol seggen:
de tins wert en to hoch gesett,
se können dar nîchtes van hebbēn.

Why is it that so many millers now steal and say they have ground so small? I shall tell you that well: the rents are set too high for them, they get nothing out of it themselves.

(Uhland, I, 86, 13)

These two works were exceptional, and most writers agreed with the author of the *Devil's Net* (v. 9429), who said of the miller: "Ich waisz kain fromen uf der erden" (I know no honest one in the world). Otto Beneke explains the result of this situation as follows: "Enough, it was soon rumored that the millers reaped where they had not

³⁵ *Piers Plowman* (B, II, 110-11) closely associates "Rainalde the reue" and "Munde the mellere."

³⁶ F. Vetter, ed. (Frauenfeld, 1887), vv. 19,015 ff. For numerous sixteenth- and seventeenth-century references to the miller's dishonesty, see M. P. Tilley, *Dictionary of Proverbs of England* (Ann Arbor, 1950), pp. 461-62. A German song says that what the villagers need in their village is "An Miller, der nit raubt." J. Bolte, *Der Bauer im deutschen Liede* (Berlin, 1890), p. 202, str. 7.

sown; and in Charlemagne's time their reputation was so bad that their sons were excluded from all spiritual offices and dignities" (p. 12). I doubt that such regulations were actually made in Charlemagne's day,⁸⁷ but literature shows that later generations thought so. Throughout the Middle Ages people looked upon millers as criminals, and, in allotting the burdens of justice, many governments required them to furnish the gallows ladders. This insult naturally increased the prejudice felt toward the profession; so, as Beneke says, "even though the imperial police ordinances of 1548 and 1577 had completely freed millers and other misjudged men of honor from all blemish, they were nevertheless not freed from it in popular speech as long as they were not relieved of the odious ladder that still remained with them because of ancient tradition" (p. 12). This custom of supplying the gallows ladder helps clarify an episode in another German tale recorded by Keller (pp. 97 ff.). A miller's body is loaded on an ass for its journey to the graveyard; but the ass halts with it under a gallows. Because the ass refuses to take the body any farther, it has to be buried there. Similarly in his satire "Against Millers and Bakers" (v. 19), Lydgate suggests that their guild should build its chapel under a pillory. Breughel immortalized the miller's dishonesty by including a mill in his allegory of "Dishonesty"; and it was even said that the storks were afraid to nest on the mill for fear of having their eggs stolen.⁸⁸ This prejudice against millers must have obtained in Spain too, as we see by the fact that Lazarillo de Tormes' dishonest father was a miller who bled his sacks too much. In a fifteenth-century Scottish comic-didactic poem called "Colkelbie's Sow," one of the scoundrels at the harlot's feast is a "malgratious millare."⁸⁹ This probably alluded to his being "out of grace" because of his theft and dissolute life, unless the word "malgratious" meant "ill-favored" and referred to his ugliness.

Thus we see that Chaucer was following tradition when he said of Symkyn, "A thief he was for sothe of corn and mele" (*C.T.*, A 3939). In "The Mylnere of Abington," which is a later version of the story told by Chaucer's reeve, the miller is described as follows:

The mylner was so trewe and fele,
Of each mannes corne wolde he steale
More than his toledish by a deale:
He let for no shame.

⁸⁷ None is mentioned by Koehne. It was traditional for medieval poets to attribute spurious laws to Charlemagne. In 883 Notker of St. Gall wrote in his *Gesta Caroli* that Alcuin had two pupils who were "sons of a miller in the service of the monastery of Saint Columban, who did not seem fit and proper persons for promotion to the command of bishoprics or monasteries; but even these men were, by the influence probably of their teacher, advanced . . . [to such offices]." *Early Lives of Charlemagne*, ed. A. J. Grant (London, 1905), p. 71.

⁸⁸ "Warum die storchen nit auf der mül nisten? Sy fürchten, der muller stell in die ayer." H. Hügli, *Der deutsche Bauer im Mittelalter*, Bern diss. (Strassburg, 1928), p. 3.

⁸⁹ *The Bannatyne MS*, ed. W. T. Ritchie (Edinburgh, 1930), IV, 284, v. 64.

He was so subtyll and so slye,
 He wolde it take before their eye,
 And make them a proper lye,
 And put himselfe out of blame.⁴⁰

Perhaps the cleverest thief in English legend was the miller in *Merie Tales of Skelton*, who successfully stole his liege-lord's cup, sheets, horse, and priest.⁴¹ Rabelais alluded to the miller's proverbial dishonesty by letting the infant Gargantua take two tolls from one sack,⁴² in accordance with an old proverb. Miller Robyn was even greedier; for "Wel koude he stelen corn and tollen thries" (*C.T.*, A 562). Robyn plays a "baggepipe" and Symkyn can "pipen" (*C.T.*, A 565, 3927). The bagpipe may only serve to show the vulgar and lecherous nature of the miller,⁴³ but I believe it related to a proverb recorded by Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (VII, 1643) and also by Uhland (I, 84, 4):

welcher sack nicht nach seiner pfeiff
 wolte tanzen, der muste zur straff
 sich zweimal moltern lassen.

If any sack would not dance to
 his pipe, it had to let itself be
 tolled twice in punishment.

Even if Chaucer did not know this proverb, he may have known that his public would expect the miller to play this instrument. In 1407 the Lollard William Thorpe, who described the Canterbury pilgrimages somewhat as Chaucer did, complained that the pilgrims made too much noise with their bagpipes.⁴⁴ This may corroborate Chaucer, but it is just as probable that Thorpe was using some literary source such as *The Canterbury Tales*.

Chaucer is clearly following tradition when he says the miller Robyn had a "thombe of gold" (*C.T.*, A 563). Two centuries later George Gascoigne could still say that priests can take a holiday, "when millers, toll not with a golden thumb."⁴⁵ In an English jest book of that era a merchant derides a miller by saying that he cannot see his golden thumb, although every honest miller has one; and the miller replies that his thumb is truly golden, but cuckolds shall never see it.⁴⁶ A modern German proverb says, "Der Müller ist fromm, der Haar auf den Zähnen hat" (A miller is honest if he has hair on his teeth). This now means that a good miller is a shrewd miller; but I believe

⁴⁰ W. C. Hazlitt, *Early Popular Poetry of England* (London, 1866), p. 102, vv. 48 ff.

⁴¹ *Shakespeare Jest-Books*, ed. W. C. Hazlitt (London, 1864), II, 22 ff.

⁴² "tiroyt d'un sac deux moustures," *Gargantua*, XI.

⁴³ For symbolism of medieval bagpipe, see George F. Jones, "Wittenwiler's *Becki* and the Medieval Bagpipe," *JEGP*, XLVIII (1949), 209 ff. Although Block (p. 241) recognizes the symbolic and satiric value of the bagpipe, he nevertheless maintains (p. 240) that Chaucer owes his bagpipe to personal observation.

⁴⁴ A. W. Pollard, *Fifteenth Century Prose and Verse* (Edinburgh, 1903), p. 140.

⁴⁵ *Glasse of Government*, ed. J. Cunliffe (Cambridge, 1910), p. 171.

⁴⁶ *Shakespeare Jest-Books*, I, 23. Another of these anecdotes (I, 31 ff.) tells of a miller who steals some nuts and thereby reminds us of Conrad's miller who stole the nut oil.

that it originally meant the same as the English proverb, since no hair grows on one's teeth. This meaning is apparent in a Hessian proverb cited by Böckel (p. xxvi): "Der Müller ist fromm, der Haar auf der Zunge und in der Hand hat" (A miller is honest who has hair on his tongue and in his hand).

Another ingredient of miller-satire, popular in Germany but missed by Chaucer, concerns the miller's swine. Because it was easy for the miller to steal his clients' grain but dangerous for him to sell it, he would convert some of it into pork by keeping hogs. This abuse did not go undetected, and almost every locality had ordinances regulating the number of hogs a miller might keep, the number varying with the size of the mill and the number of millstones kept in operation. According to Beneke, the millers of Ulm could keep only three (p. 12). Conrad's *Chess-Book* alludes to this practice of keeping an excessive number of hogs (vv. 19,122 ff.); and a character in Wittenwiler's *Ring* praises the pleasure of private ownership by saying that one's own chickens taste fatter than the miller's fattening hogs (v. 3376). His contemporary and compatriot, the author of the *Devil's Net*, says that not only the miller and his children are thieves, but also his geese, cattle, chickens, asses, and hogs (vv. 9466 ff.). There may be an allusion to this practice in "Colkelbie's Sow" in which one of the hogs is named "mage of the milhill" (I, 168). The story-book *Wendunmuth* cites a popular song that the children in the street knew how to sing:

Die müller han die besten schwein,
so in dem gantzen lande sein,
das machen der bauren secke.
(I, 336)

The millers have the best swine
that are in the whole country.
The peasants' sacks cause that.

Thus we see that people acquired their prejudice against the millers in their most formative years. These verses are found in an anecdote about a miller who was sentenced to hang for thievery. When his lord asks him to recommend an honest successor, the miller states that he knows none. Thereupon the lord pardons him, adding that even if he is dishonest his tricks are all well known.⁴⁷

The "honest" miller of Mansfield is not a thief, but only a poacher. On the other hand, many millers were accused of even worse conduct. Medieval people were especially critical of those who took advantage of others in distress. Chaucer's reeve seems to have had that in mind when he let Symkyn rob the dying manciple:

For which this millere stal bothe mele and corn
An hundred tyme moore than biforn;
For therbiforn he stal but curteisly,
But now he was a theef outrageously.
(C.T., A 3995-98)

In Wittenwiler's *Ring* the miller likewise takes advantage of another person in distress (vv. 486 ff.). During the peasant tournament an

⁴⁷ This story also appears in the *Wunderhorn* (II, 395) and in a Latin anecdote by the German humanist Heinrich Bebel (Böckel, *op. cit.*, p. xxvi).

ass runs away with its rider, who is shaken nearly to death. Seeing his plight, the miller runs up and says:

Herr, wolt ir daz tier verchafffen?
Zehen schilling an ein phunt
Gib ich euch ze diser stund.

Sir, do you wish to sell the
beast? I'll give you ten shillings
on the pound right now.

Thus, true to his greedy nature, the miller offers the wretch only half of the ass's value, knowing that he will sell it to save his life. Elsewhere Wittenwiler warns of the sin incurred by demanding more than a fair rate of profit.⁴⁸

Whereas the miller's greed usually led only to theft, it sometimes led to even worse crimes. In the *Merie Tales of Skelton* (II, 23 ff.), the miller sees that he is being watched by his lord's servant, so he has his wife throw one of his children into the mill pond. When everyone runs out to save the child, his assistant steals some of the grain, but we are not told whether it was a "courteous" or an "outrageous" amount. This story is of interest because, although the extant version is quite modern, it nevertheless echoes the old feudal relationship in which the lord could punish his serf without due process of law. A popular German song tells of a miller who sold his wife and child to three murderers.⁴⁹ Most later versions do not make it clear just why the thieves want the victims, and the song lingers only as testimony of the miller's greed. Originally the song had referred to the superstitious practice of killing a pregnant woman to get the finger of her unborn child as a charm against arrest, and the song had made it clear that the miller's child was still unborn.⁵⁰

Since the prejudice against the millers was of later origin, it is interesting to see how it worked its way into popular exorcisms, which are among the oldest forms of literature. A good example of *Blutsegen* (charm against hemorrhage) is:

Blut, stehe still, still, still,
Wie der ungerechte Müller am Abend
will.⁵¹

Blood, stand still, still, still,
as the dishonest miller wishes in
the evening (?)

It is a moot question whether the word *ungerechte* in this passage is a restrictive or an epithetic adjective.

It may be argued that the miller must have enjoyed some social prestige, since he so often spoke with the king, as, for example, in "The King and the Miller of Mansfield," "The Miller on the Dee,"

⁴⁸ "Chlainer gwin is got mār, / Den grossen suochent wuochrer" (vv. 4945 ff.). The miller's lawful gain seems to have varied. In 1256 those in Bavaria could take one-thirtieth of the grain (*MGH, Legum*, II, 600, No. 55). In 1620 the English millers could take one-twenty-fourth (Hazlitt, *Early Popular Poetry*, III, 102).

⁴⁹ *Wunderhorn*, I, 218. Similar versions are given by Böckel, *op. cit.*, p. 55, and Böhme, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

⁵⁰ For use of fetal finger as charm, see Böhme, *op. cit.*, pp. 189 ff.

⁵¹ A. Kuhn, *Sagen, Gebräuche und Märchen aus Westfalen* (Leipzig, 1859), II, 197. For other examples, see O. Ebermann, *Blut- und Wundsegen*, Palaestra, XXIV (Berlin, 1903), 117 ff.

and "The Miller of Sans Souci." It was no coincidence that the miller was chosen: as Bishop Percy observed, he was chosen because he was one of the "meanest" of the king's subjects and therefore emphasized the democratic attitude of the monarch who deigned to speak with him.⁶² In a fifteenth-century German Shrovetide play called "A Play about an Emperor and an Abbot," the miller is the clever person who answers the three questions for the abbot, thus taking the place of the equally lowly shepherd in Percy's version or the swineherd in Pauli's version.⁶³ The similar social position of the miller and shepherd is suggested in a German song:

A Rettig und a Rüeb,	A radish and a turnip,
A Müller und a Dieb,	a miller and a thief,
A Schäfer und a Schinder	a shepherd and a skinner
Sind lauter geschwistrige Kinder. ⁶⁴	are all blood brothers.

When the miller in this play is appointed abbot, he apologizes for his base origin:

Und tut mich darumb nit versmehen,	And don't despise me because
Das man mich ein mulner hat gesehen.	you have seen me as a miller.
(vv. 29-30)	

At this point a peasant says that the new abbot had often ground his grain, and only he knew whether it had all been returned. Like his German counterparts, Chaucer's miller is of low social status, and his behavior makes him clearly the "cherl" of the pilgrimage (*C.T.*, A 3182). In real life his company would hardly have been tolerated by the "verray parfit gentil knight" or by the prim and proper prioress. Most probably they mingle in the poem for literary reasons.

In conclusion we see that, in spite of his many individual traits and "engaging realism," Chaucer's miller outwardly conformed to the accepted medieval idea of a miller. This conformity need not imply any inability or lack of originality on Chaucer's part, since it was probably a concession to the demands of his public, who could not appreciate any other kind of miller. Because both of his millers had to comply with certain popular requirements, they naturally had to share certain traits. Therefore he deserves great credit for the ingenious way he justifies their similarity: by letting the reeve model his miller on the miller of the pilgrimage.

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⁶² Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, ed. H. W. Wheatley (London, 1886), II, 178.

⁶³ A. v. Keller, *Fastnachtspiele aus dem fünfzehnten Jahrhundert*, BLVS, XXVIII (Stuttgart, 1853), I, No. 22; Percy, *op. cit.*, II, 303; Johannes Pauli, *Schimpf und Ernst*, ed. H. Österley, BLVS, LXXXV (Stuttgart, 1866), No. 55.

⁶⁴ Ebermann, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

HOW OLDCASTLE BECAME FALSTAFF

By RUDOLPH FIEHLER

One of the better known passages in the first formal biography of Shakespeare, produced by Nicholas Rowe in 1709, is that having to do with Sir John Falstaff. After noting that *Merry Wives of Windsor* was written at the suggestion of Queen Elizabeth, Rowe continues: "Upon this occasion it may not be improper to observe that this part of Falstaff is said to have been written originally under the name of Oldcastle; some of the family being then remaining, the Queen was pleased to command him to alter it; upon which he made use of Falstaff."¹ The fate of this statement of fact under the pens of subsequent commentators supplies an interesting footnote to the history of Shakespeare scholarship.

Rowe's pronouncement was made more than a century after the name of Shakespeare's comic had been changed. It may have been only slender recollection of a tradition that was thus recorded, perhaps reported by the actor Thomas Betterton from information gathered during visits to the scenes of Shakespeare's life, though it could also have been possible to derive the information from earlier written sources. About 1625, when Shakespeare himself was still a living memory, Richard James, the librarian and friend of the antiquarian Robert Bruce Cotton, had written a "Legend and Defence of the Noble Knight and Martyr, Sir John Oldcastle," in the preface of which he noted that "In Shakespeare's first shew of Harrie the Fift the person with which he undertook to play a buffone was not Falstaffe, but Sir John Oldcastle."² Thomas Fuller also had included this point of information in his *Church History of Britain* and in his *History of the Worthies of England*.³

Though proof of the matter was thus available, Shakespeareans of the eighteenth century were by no means agreed that Falstaff had originally been Oldcastle. It was Lewis Theobald, often underrated as a Shakespeare critic, who first undertook to demonstrate the case positively.⁴ In notes to his ten-volume edition of the plays, published in 1733, he mentioned these points:

(1) The line "As the honey of Hybla, my old lad of the castle" in *1 Henry IV*, I, ii, appears to be a pun on the name Oldcastle.

(2) The epilogue to *2 Henry IV* explains, "Oldcastle died a martyr, and this [Falstaff] is not the man."

¹ Nicholas Rowe, ed., *Works of Mr. William Shakespear* (London, 1709), I, ix.

² The passage from James's preface has been many times printed. It is included in the *Shakespeare Allusion-Book* (Oxford, 1932), p. 320.

³ Thomas Fuller, *Church History of Britain* (London, 1655), p. 168; *History of the Worthies of England*, ed. P. Austin Nuttall (London, 1840), II, 455.

⁴ Lewis Theobald, ed., *Works of Shakespeare* (London, 1733), III, 348-49.

(3) In the old play *Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*, Oldcastle, familiarly called Jockie, occupies the place of Falstaff as one of Prince Hal's thieving followers.

(4) The 1600 Quarto of *2 Henry IV* has a mistaken speech-prefix *Old.* where one would expect *Fal.* for Falstaff.

(5) The prologue to the *First Part of Sir John Oldcastle*, dated 1600, forestalls confusion between Oldcastle and Falstaff through an announcement that the subject of the play is no "pampered glutton" nor "counselor to youthful sin."

Theobald's excellent presentation fell almost at once under a cloud, probably in consequence of his literary feud with Alexander Pope. When Pope in 1725 rushed into print his somewhat hasty edition of Shakespeare, he must have known that Theobald had for some time been at work on a similar project. He need not have been surprised then, when in the next year Theobald brought out his famous animadversions entitled "Shakespeare Restored, or a Specimen of the many errors as well Committed as Unamended by Mr. Pope in his late edition of this Poet; designed not only to correct this edition, but to restore the true Reading of Shakespeare in all the Editions ever published. By Mr. Theobald."

Pope might well have been embarrassed. He had, for instance, guessed that the phrase *a table of green fields* in the folio text of *Henry V* had originally been a stage direction intended for a hypothetical property-man named Greenfields. Theobald unassailably reconstructed this puzzle into what is perhaps his most famous emendation: '*a babled of green fields*, that is, the dying Falstaff babbled something of the Twenty-third Psalm.⁸ Pope at first disdained to reply to the implication that he had bungled, but after two years he produced the *Dunciad*, the epic of stupidity in which Theobald reigned as the prince of dullness until he was mercifully dethroned in favor of Colley Cibber. Also about the same time Pope brought out another edition of Shakespeare, for which with bad grace he appropriated some of Theobald's more felicitous comments without giving due credit, though somehow he failed to take any notice of what Theobald had written about Falstaff's originally having been Oldcastle.

William Warburton, Pope's chosen protégé and successor, took it upon himself also to dislike Theobald, with whom he had once worked on the text of Shakespeare. When Warburton in 1747 produced his own edition of Shakespeare, he answered Theobald's fling at Pope by promising a text "restored from the blunders of the first two editors and the interpolations of the two last," one of the two last having been Theobald, by now resting beyond the reach of cavil in his grave.

In the matter of Falstaff having once been Oldcastle, Warburton deigned to comment only on the supposed pun in the phrase "my old lad of the castle," and here he appealed to the authority of Thomas

⁸ Theobald, *Shakespeare Restored* (London, 1726), pp. 137-38.

Fuller while neglecting to give any credit to Theobald, against whom he seems to have harbored continued ill feeling.⁶ At Trinity College, Cambridge, is preserved a set of Theobald's Shakespeare, in which Warburton penned a note claiming as his own an array of passages, both in Theobald's preface and in the notes, which, Warburton alleged, Theobald had deprived him of.⁷

While Warburton was still enjoying his triumph as the latest editor of Shakespeare, an article appeared in *Gentleman's Magazine* (in 1752) over the mysterious initials P. T., entitled "Observations on Shakespeare's Falstaff."⁸ This piece is a fulmination against the notion that Shakespeare could ever have put the noble Protestant hero Sir John Oldcastle in the place of the fat rogue who was Falstaff. It points out that Oldcastle had been highly regarded in Shakespeare's time as a martyr in the cause of Wyclifite reform, and that the martyrologist John Foxe had given him a most prominent place in his *Acts and Monuments of These Latter Days*. That Shakespeare should have made mockery of so good a man was simply not to be believed. P. T. exclaims: "What, I say, could *Shakespeare* make a pampered glutton, a debauched monster, of a noble personage, who stood foremost on the list of *English* reformers and Protestant martyrs, and that too at a time when reformation was the Queen's chief study? 'Tis absurd to suppose, 'tis impossible for any man to imagine." By way of explaining away evidence that Falstaff had first been Oldcastle, P. T. undertook to refute only the supposed pun on the line, "As the honey of Hybla, my old lad of the castle." He contended that *honey* should be taken to refer to "sack, or sack and sugar," and that with insertion of another comma the line ought to read, "As is the honey, my old lad, of the Castle," the *Castle* being taken to denote a hypothetical inn of the same genus as Pope's hypothetical Greenfields.

It is relevant to note here that the point thus seized on by P. T. was the same which Warburton elected to take note of five years earlier in his edition of Shakespeare; for the initials P. T. point intriguingly to the efforts of Pope and Warburton to discredit Theobald and all his works. When Pope in 1733 undertook to publish certain of his correspondence, a mere publisher's announcement seemed to him too naïve a way of appealing to his public. Rather, he concocted a feud, alleging that one P. T. had, through the bookseller Edmund Curll, offered for sale some two hundred of his letters. He furthered this myth through disavowals inserted as advertisements in the *Grub-Street Journal*, while Curll, on his side, could only protest that the

⁶ William Warburton, *Works of Shakespeare* (London, 1747), IV, 102-103.

⁷ The librarian of Trinity College supplies the information that Warburton's note is found in Theobald's *Shakespeare* (I, 119), and that the note is quoted by W. W. Greg in his catalogue of the Capell collection at Cambridge. For an assessment of Warburton's scholarship see Arthur W. Evans, *Warburton and the Warburtonians* (London, 1932).

⁸ P. T., "Observations on Shakespeare's Falstaff," *Gentleman's Magazine*, XXII (October, 1752), 459-61.

letters had actually been offered to him by a mysterious and unidentified emissary of one P. T.

Not until 1860, more than a hundred years after the appearance of P. T.'s "Observations on Shakespeare's Falstaff," did Charles Wentworth Dilke, then editor of the *Athenaeum*, unravel the whole devious intrigue of Pope's letters, and show that P. T. could have been none other than Pope himself.⁹ As Pope was eight years in his grave when P. T.'s "Observations" appeared, it seems unlikely that he wrote the article, but it is perhaps not inconceivable that the author was his literary executor, William Warburton.

Such was the prestige of Pope and Warburton that Theobald's comments on the matter of Oldcastle and Falstaff were either slighted or overlooked by Shakespeare critics during the rest of the eighteenth century. The first edition of Johnson and Steevens' Shakespeare, published in 1773, has this observation: "Sir John Oldcastle was not a character ever introduced by Shakespeare, nor did he ever occupy the place of Falstaff."¹⁰ This dictum remained in six subsequent editions, along with this added comment from Edmund Malone:

The cause of all the confusion relative to these two characters [Oldcastle and Falstaff] and the tradition mentioned by Rowe, that our author changed the name from Oldcastle to Falstaff (to which I do not give the smallest credit) seems to be this: Shakespeare appears evidently to have caught the idea of the character of Falstaff from a wretched play entitled *The Famous Victories of King Henry V.* . . . Shakespeare probably never intended to ridicule the real Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, in any respect.¹¹

There is no further mention of Theobald's contribution.

The sanity of Theobald's presentation finally prevailed when in 1841 Halliwell-Phillips in his essay "On the Character of Sir John Falstaff" reinforced the argument by citing the testimony of Richard James, already mentioned above, and restating that of Thomas Fuller. Halliwell's essay, later incorporated into his *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*,¹² seems to have settled the matter, for no well-read Shakespeare scholar since his time has refused credence to Rowe's assertion that the part of Falstaff was written originally under the name of Oldcastle.

Further explanations are in order, however. In the first place, the historical Sir John Oldcastle was known in Elizabethan times as a follower of John Wyclif rather than as a thievish servant of St.

⁹ Pope's intrigue was unfolded in an article in the *Athenaeum* for Sept. 8, 1860, which was reprinted in the author's *Papers of a Critic* (London, 1875), I, 297 ff. See also the Elwin-Courthope edition of *Works of Alexander Pope* (London, 1871), VI, 419 ff.

¹⁰ Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, *Plays of William Shakespeare* (London, 1773), V, 232.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Isaac Reed's re-issue of 1803, XI, 196-98.

¹² Cf. Halliwell-Phillips, *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare* (London, 1882), II, 351.

Nicholas. His place in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* dates from the first edition of 1563, published before even Shakespeare was born; yet the unknown Elizabethan dramatist who first introduced Oldcastle to the stage in the *Famous Victories* showed him as a highwayman, in complete disregard of the martyr-picture in John Foxe's book.

In the second place, the Oldcastle of the *Famous Victories* is a mere pale shadow beside Shakespeare's richly comical Falstaff. He is neither fat, nor old, nor even funny, and his part in the play is quite unimportant. The two problems thus raised admit of no very simple solution, but fortunately sufficient evidence is at hand to permit reconstruction of the processes whereby Oldcastle was metamorphosized—first into a highwayman and then into a clown.

Oldcastle, executed in 1417 for open defiance of ecclesiastical discipline and royal authority, was not openly characterized as a martyr until the time of the Reformation. It was more than a century after Oldcastle had been excommunicated as a heretic before William Tyndale, self-exiled to the Low Countries, put into print an account representing the Lollard champion as a victim of unjust persecution. The martyr-history thus given currency was derived, authentically enough, from the original Latin account of the proceedings prepared at the time by direction of the Archbishop of Canterbury and by him circulated among the clergy.¹³ But the Archbishop's account, and the martyr-history as well, stopped short with the sentence of excommunication, giving no hint of later events that were to lead to the execution of Oldcastle as an instigator of armed insurrection.

In pre-Reformation times the story of Oldcastle's trial and excommunication may well have served as a warning against heresy. Now, in the ferment of the times, it was changed into a stirring tale of martyrdom. As defender of Lollardy, Oldcastle had argued the very same matters that were being zealously pressed by the reformers. Oldcastle had disputed transubstantiation, denounced images, declared against pilgrimages, and denied the need of private confession. The martyr-history made the most of these points, imaginatively comparing the trial of Oldcastle before his ecclesiastical judges with that of Christ before Pilate and Herod.

Tyndale's martyr-history was printed in 1530 as a sort of appendix to a similar but somewhat longer history of another fifteenth-century Lollard, William Thorpe, who like Oldcastle had been brought before Archbishop Thomas Arundel on charges of heresy. The little volume, identified as the *Book of Thorpe*, was soon ordered burned in England as heretical,¹⁴ and bibliographers have supposed it to have been altogether lost,¹⁵ but a single copy is now to be found in the British Museum.¹⁶

¹³ Archbishop Thomas Arundel's account may be found in *Fasciculi Zizaniorum Magistri Johannis Wycliff cum Tritico*, ed. W. W. Shirley, Rolls Series (London, 1858), pp. 433-49. It is included also in Rymer's *Foedera*, IX, 61-66.

¹⁴ *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII* (London, 1880), V, 769.

¹⁵ Cf. *DNB*, article on William Tyndale.

¹⁶ The British Museum copy of *Book of Thorpe* is perhaps not unique. For

Fourteen years after the appearance and suppression of Tyndale's history of Sir John Oldcastle, the material was reworked by John Bale, author of the old history play *Kyng Johan* and notable protagonist of the Reformation, who was at the time in Germany, having fled in the face of conservative reaction at home. John Bale expanded Tyndale's account to about twice the original length, while retaining nearly all of the original phraseology. Bale's version, published under the title "A Breve Chronycle of the Examynacyoun and Death of the Blessed Martyr in Christ, Syr Johan Oldecastell," gives only vague credit in its preface to Tyndale.¹⁷ But while Tyndale's shorter version of the Oldcastle martyr-history was quite forgotten, Bale's reworking of it was fated to attract wide attention, for it was incorporated almost word for word into John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*.¹⁸

Canonization of Oldcastle as a hero of Protestantism in the *Book of Martyrs* brought forth an early and acid response from a representative of the old order. In 1566, three years after the appearance of the *Acts and Monuments*, the book was violently attacked by Nicholas Harpsfield, an ecclesiastical judge during the time of Queen Mary, who was then in the Tower of London. Using the pseudonym Alanus Cope, Nicholas Harpsfield in his book *Dialogi Sex* in turn defended the institutions of the papacy, monasticism, invocation of saints, and veneration of images, lastly denouncing Foxe and his book, particularly because Foxe in his story of Oldcastle had made a martyr out of one whose name deserved rather to be registered in infamy as that of a prodigious traitor.¹⁹

Harpsfield's attack seemed to be well founded. The only source for Tyndale's martyr-history had been the Archbishop's Latin account of the trial, which closed with a sentence of excommunication, and actually there was a great deal more to the story. After Oldcastle had been confined to the Tower, following the sentence of excommunication, he escaped from his prison, and thereafter went into hiding for four years before he was finally apprehended in Wales and brought to London for execution. During the four years Oldcastle was at large, an increasingly heavier price was put on his head. Some six weeks

mention of what was probably another copy, see *Select Works of John Bale*, ed. H. Christmas. Parker Society (Cambridge, 1849), p. 62 n.

¹⁷ Bale's "Breve Chronycle" was first published in London in 1544. It was reprinted in 1729, and again in 1849 in *Select works of John Bale*. The passage in the preface reads: "I remember that fourteen years ago the true servant of God, William Tyndale, put into print a certain brief examination of the said lord Cobham: the which examination was written in the time of the said lord's trouble by a certain friend of his, and so reserved in copies unto this our age." Whether Tyndale himself wrote the martyr-history of Oldcastle is open to question. The related account of William Thorpe, according to the colophon, was written in 1460, and in Sir Thomas More's *Confutation* (1532) is attributed to one George Constantine. Cf. *DNB*, XIX, 805.

¹⁸ Cf. John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments of These Latter Days*, ed. Josiah Pratt (London, 1870), III, 332-49.

¹⁹ James Gairdner, *Lollardy and the Reformation* (London, 1908), I, 358-63.

after his evasion from the Tower he was blamed for fomenting what appeared to have been a formidable uprising against the person of the king at St. Giles, northwest of the city of London. He was suspected also of inciting the Scots against the English, besides other mischief, so that by the time he was finally hunted down he had acquired the reputation of a fearsome outlaw.

Chroniclers of the time, in recording the judgment and execution of Oldcastle, were unanimous in stigmatizing him as an execrable traitor. Harpsfield appears to have derived his historical information in this matter chiefly from the *Historia Anglicana* of Thomas Walsingham and from the chronicle of Robert Fabyan,²⁰ but he might have found corroboration for his point of view in a dozen other old chronicles.²¹

When Foxe was thus made sharply aware of the incongruity of his martyr-hero with the villain of the chronicles, he fought back stubbornly at his critics through several editions of his book, adding a long and bitter "Defence of the Lord Cobham," in which he assailed the testimony of the chronicles as partisan falsification.²² Foxe's arguments can have carried weight only with his friends; the net effect of his protestation was to throw doubt on the historical validity of his entire work.

At the time of this contention over his memory, Oldcastle had already been dead for a century and a half, but in popular tradition he had never been forgotten. Certainly his military exploits were legendary. During the reign of Henry IV he had served effectively as a captain in the Welsh marches against the rebel Owen Glendower. When Prince Hal and his father quarreled over which side the English should take in the struggle between Burgundy and Orleans, Oldcastle helped to lead a force of English troops across the Channel in support of the Duke of Burgundy, who was favored by Prince Hal.²³ Through marriage to the thrice-widowed Lady Joan de Cobham, heiress to her grandfather's vast estates, Oldcastle had attained to the title of Lord Cobham, and for a few years had been one of the most powerful nobles of the realm.²⁴ In undertaking to defend the Lollards, he had placed himself on the side of the discontented masses over against a form of authority which for many symbolized oppression. Exploits attributed to him during his four years in hiding fitted well into the mold of the

²⁰ Thomas Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, Rolls Series (London, 1864), II, 291 ff.; Robert Fabyan, *New Chronicles of England and France*, ed. H. Ellis (London, 1811), p. 578.

²¹ Cf. Wilhelm Baeske, *Oldcastle-Falstaff in der Englischen Literatur bis Shakespeare*, Palaestra, L (1905).

²² "Defence of the Lord Cobham," Foxe, *op. cit.*, pp. 349-405.

²³ The story is most fully told in the chronicle of Thomas Otterbourne, printed in *Duo Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores Veteres*, ed. Thomas Hearne (London, 1732), pp. 268-72.

²⁴ For materials on Oldcastle, see James Tait's article in *DNB*; J. H. Wylie, *History of England under Henry the Fourth* (London, 1896); and W. T. Waugh, "Sir John Oldcastle," *English Historical Review*, XX (1905), 434 ff.

Robin Hood tradition. Yet neither in the chronicles nor in other historical evidence is there any indication that Oldcastle was ever a highwayman. And still it is as a highwayman that he appears in the *Famous Victories*.

The notion that Oldcastle was a highwayman arose quite adventitiously out of the legend of the wild Prince Hal, who as Henry V won the famous victory over the French at Agincourt. Despite his unpromising youth, Henry as king was notably favorable to the Church and its institutions, and had something of a reputation for piety. When he came to the throne on the death of his father, a chronicler expressed the hope that heavy snows falling on the day of the coronation might be an omen that as king he would cause the snows and severities of vices to fall in his reign, and the mild fruits of virtue to spring up.²⁵ In 1437, fifteen years after the death of the illustrious Henry, an Italian monk who styled himself Titus Livius was commissioned to write a sort of official biography. He admiringly wrote of the one-time wild prince that when he became king he put aside all his youthful follies.²⁶ Thus began the story of sudden reformation which is found in the opening scenes of Shakespeare's *Henry V*. The story was already well developed when in the early sixteenth century an anonymous writer, known to historians only as the "translator of Livius," expanded the earlier Latin biography into an English account, and added from the recollections of a courtier that the wild prince in his youth had waylaid and robbed his own tax receivers, and that after he became king he dismissed from his presence all his old evil companions.²⁷

Another element of the legend appears to have originated in Thomas Elyot's *Boke Named the Governour*, printed in 1531.²⁸ Here it is related that one of Prince Hal's servants was arraigned before the king's bench on a charge of felony, and that the Prince in a threatening manner demanded the release of his man, whereupon the intrepid Chief Justice, nothing moved, solemnly reminded the rash prince of his duty and sent him to prison at the pleasure of his father the king. This story was amplified a few years later in the chronicle of Edward Hall, who wrote that the young prince, "for imprisonment of one of his wanton mates and unthrifty playfarers . . . struck the Chief Justice with his fist in the face," but that when he became king he "banished and separated from him all his old flatterers and familiar companions," and "inhibited them upon a great pain not once to approach either to his speech or presence, nor yet to lodge or sojourn within ten miles of his court or mansion."²⁹

²⁵ *Historia Anglicana*, II, 290.

²⁶ Titus Livius, *Vita Henrici Quinti*, ed. Thomas Hearne (London, 1716).

²⁷ Cf. *First English Life of Henry the Fifth*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (Oxford, 1911); also Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1913), pp. 64-67.

²⁸ Thomas Elyot, *Boke Named the Governour*, ed. H. Croft (London, 1883), II, 61 ff.

²⁹ *Hall's Chronicle*, ed. H. Ellis (London, 1809), p. 46. Otherwise, Hall relied upon Bale's martyr-history. Cf. *Acts and Monuments*, III, 377-78.

Here, then, are all the elements of the story of the wild prince in the *Famous Victories*. Prince Hal robs his father's receivers, and one of his band is captured, whereupon the impetuous Hal, demanding the release of his man, gives the Chief Justice a box on the ear. Later, as king, he turns over a new leaf and banishes his erstwhile cronies, warning them not to approach within ten miles of his person. To all this the anonymous author of the *Famous Victories* made a further significant addition in that he identified Oldcastle as one of Prince Hal's unthrifty companions. This identification, unwarranted by history, is still quite understandable. Oldcastle was remembered as having been useful to Prince Hal, assisting in putting down the rebel Owen Glendower, and helping to fight the Prince's private battle against the Duke of Orleans in 1411; but he was remembered also as having been condemned as a heretic and traitor. Prince Hal, on the other hand, was notably pious as a king, and he did nothing at all to prevent the execution of his former friend in 1417. It followed logically, though from faulty premises, that Oldcastle was a highwayman. Hal was said to have robbed his tax receivers, and Oldcastle was believed to have been associated with him in the days before he dismissed from his presence his former evil companions; therefore, Oldcastle must have been a highwayman, and so he is represented in the *Famous Victories*.

Still remaining to be explained is the transmutation of the highwayman of the *Famous Victories* into Shakespeare's clown. It is clear, to begin with, that the Oldcastle of the *Famous Victories* could have supplied only the shadow of a suggestion for the comic elements of Shakespeare's Falstaff. The highwayman of the older play is like Falstaff only in so far as he abets the young prince in his escapades and hopes for preferment when the young royal scapegrace shall become king. The only hint of comedy which he contributes to the play comes to light when he hypocritically remarks of the old king, then on his death-bed, "He is a good old man, God take to his mercy the sooner."

The real source of comedy in the *Famous Victories* is the clown Dericke,⁸⁰ and the conclusion seems inescapable that it is from this character that Shakespeare's buffoon derives his comic traits. Some years ago a Philadelphia lawyer and amateur Shakespearean, James Monaghan, set forth the theory on the basis of parallel speeches that the parts of Oldcastle and Dericke in the *Famous Victories* had been doubled in the part of Falstaff.⁸¹ This theory appears to be strikingly substantiated when the comic scenes of the older play are studied side by side with those from Shakespeare's *1 Henry IV*.

⁸⁰ The text of *Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* is conveniently available in *Chief Pre-Shakespearean Dramas*, ed. J. Q. Adams (Boston, 1924), pp. 667-712.

⁸¹ James Monaghan, "Falstaff and His Forebears," *SP*, XVIII (1923), 353-61.

Famous Victories
1 Henry IV

Oldcastle robs the king's receivers (lines 25-131)

Dericke is robbed by one of Prince Hal's followers (164-304)

Dericke and Cobler reenact the encounter of Prince Hal with the Chief Justice (362-608)

Oldcastle expects good fortune when Hal shall be king (615-85)

Dericke rails at Cobler's wife for starving him (814-40)

Oldcastle is rejected by the newly crowned Prince Hal (967-1039)

Dericke is drafted into the king's service (1228-86)

Dericke, taken prisoner by a Frenchman, escapes through stratagem (1687-1716)

Dericke becomes a "bloody soldier" by thrusting a straw into his nose to make it bleed (1837-1926)

Falstaff joins a project for robbing the receivers (Act I, Scene ii)

Falstaff is robbed by Prince Hal and Poins (II, ii)

Falstaff and Prince Hal by turns play the part of the king lecturing his wayward son (II, iv)

Falstaff expects good fortune when Hal shall be king (I, ii)

Falstaff complains that the Hostess has robbed him (II, iii)

The rejection of Falstaff is inconsistent with the historical orientation of *1 Henry IV*, but the scene is made use of in *2 Henry IV*

Falstaff is drafted into service (IV, iii)

Falstaff plays dead (V, iv); the Frenchman, out of place in *1 Henry IV*, reappears in *Henry V*

Falstaff tickles his nose with spear-grass to make it bleed (II, iv)

Oldcastle makes only three rather brief appearances in the *Famous Victories*, while Dericke stumbles across the stage six times. At no time are Oldcastle and Dericke on the stage together; so one actor could very well have assumed both roles.

The *Famous Victories* opens with Oldcastle's tale of having robbed the king's tax receivers of five hundred pounds. Shortly afterward Dericke comes on stage to complain of having been robbed. In *1 Henry IV*, Falstaff, who combines the parts of Oldcastle and Dericke, first joins enthusiastically in a project for robbing the receivers, and then is himself robbed by the prankish Prince Hal.

In the *Famous Victories*, Dericke identifies one of the Prince's men as the person who robbed him, but the Prince himself intervenes to demand the release of his man. When the Chief Justice proves obdurate, Prince Hal gives him a box on the ear. Hereupon the clown Dericke reenacts the scene, giving the blow to the constable Cobler as Chief Justice. In *1 Henry IV* the episode of the box on the ear was omitted by Shakespeare, perhaps out of respect for the dignity of royalty; but Dericke's comic reenactment of the scene can be traced in the otherwise somewhat fortuitous interlude in which Falstaff and Hal by turns play the part of the old king lecturing the other as the wayward prince.

As Dericke goes off, two of the Prince's companions come on stage, and not until two speeches later are they joined by Oldcastle. The delayed entrance suggests that a very brief interval was needed so that the actor who was playing the two roles might change his costume. The dialogue, having to do with the happy prospects of the rascals when Hal shall become king, is reflected in *1 Henry IV*, where Falstaff implores, "Do not thou, when thou art king, hang a thief," and the Prince replies somewhat equivocally, "No, thou shalt."

Other antics of the clown Dericke are also reflected in *1 Henry IV*. Dericke rails at Cobler's wife much as Falstaff complains about the Hostess. Like Falstaff, Dericke is drafted into the king's service, uses strategy to escape being killed, and then earns a reputation for being a "bloody soldier" by thrusting a straw into his nose to make it bleed. It will hardly be disputed that Falstaff in *1 Henry IV* combines the roles of Oldcastle and Dericke in the *Famous Victories*. Moreover, there is contemporary evidence that a doubling of parts by a clown actually occurred in a chronicle play of Henry V that was in existence before 1588. A well-known anecdote from the jest-book of Richard Tarlton, who died in that year, tells that this famous clown scored a hit with his audience when, besides his own comic role, he assumed to play the part of the Chief Justice in a play that must have been very similar to the *Famous Victories*.⁸² One may suppose that he pleased his audience even more if he made the part of Oldcastle ridiculous by combining it with the part of Dericke.

Doubling the parts of Oldcastle and Dericke under the name of Oldcastle entailed a peculiar historical difficulty, for the battle of Agincourt, which climaxes the *Famous Victories*, was fought in 1415, during the time Oldcastle was hiding out in England. Therefore, if the comic part in the *Famous Victories* was played under the name of Oldcastle, violence was being done to history, for the real Oldcastle could not possibly have been with King Henry in France in 1415. Perhaps it was thought expedient to replace Oldcastle with some other historical figure who had actually been at the battle of Agincourt. If so, a most likely substitute would have been Sir John Fastolf, who like Oldcastle had been a Lollard, and who certainly had been with Henry on his French adventure.⁸³ The substitution would have been easier because Sir John Fastolf had already been tagged a coward in Shakespeare's *1 Henry VI*, I, i.

There is reason to suppose, however, that an effort to substitute the name of Fastolf (or Falstaff) for that of Oldcastle in the popular spectacle would have been badly received by the playgoers, who, we may suppose, had learned to take an impious delight in jeering the

⁸² The well-known anecdote of Tarlton's receiving a box on the ear is printed in *Shakespeare Jest-Books*, ed. W. C. Hazlitt (London, 1864), II, 218-19.

⁸³ *Hal's Chronicle*, p. 62. Theobald followed history in emending "Falstaffe" in *1 Henry VI* to "Fastolf."

caricature of Puritanism which they saw in a clownish Oldcastle. Shakespeare must have changed the name of his comic sometime before February 25, 1598, when *Henry the Fourth*, "with the conceited mirthe of Sir John Ffalstaff," was entered in Stationers' Register; but as late as 1611 the playwright Nathan Field, in his *Amends for Ladies*, attributed to the "fat knight Oldcastle" the speech upon honor which in *1 Henry IV* is indubitably Falstaff's.³⁴

It may reasonably be assumed that when Shakespeare undertook to revise and transform the old chronicle play about Henry V, the comic role played under the name of Oldcastle was stealing the show. Shakespeare must have been acutely aware that Oldcastle could not in good conscience be portrayed as a participant in the famous victory at Agincourt. It may be guessed that he considered, and at first rejected, the expedient of substituting the name of Fastolf or Falstaff for Oldcastle. Instead of dropping Oldcastle, he dropped Henry's French adventure from the play and reoriented the historical basis of the plot toward Prince Hal's almost equally notable victory at Shrewsbury, where, twelve years before Agincourt, the great Harry, with the help of the historically authentic Sir John Oldcastle, had overcome the rebellious Percys, and with them the wizard Owen Glendower.

When Shakespeare wrote the part of Falstaff originally under the name of Oldcastle, his audience must have been disturbed only mildly, if at all, by the substitution of the battle of Shrewsbury for the battle of Agincourt. For the playgoers, the comic sequences in which Oldcastle had become a composite of highwayman and clown were more essential to the entertainment. The Puritans, on the other hand, were mightily disturbed by continued portrayal of John Foxe's martyr-hero as a clown, and it was they, sometime after Shakespeare had recast the old chronicle play, who demanded the sort of apology that was appended to *2 Henry IV*. The circumstances suggest that Shakespeare, after a storm of Puritan protest, reluctantly resorted to an expedient he had earlier rejected, and changed the name of his comic from Oldcastle to Falstaff.

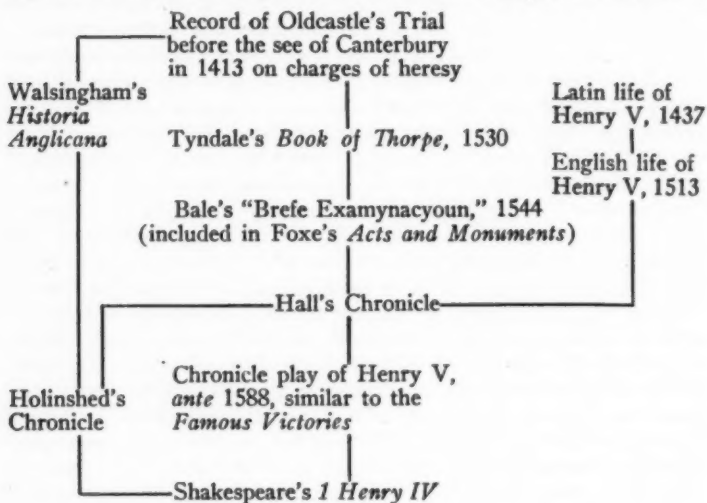
In Shakespeare's day, as in ours, *1 Henry IV* had popular appeal more because of its comic scenes than because of its historical plot, and it was to be expected that Shakespeare's public soon would demand more Falstaffian humor. When, in response to such demand, Shakespeare wrote the *Second Part of Henry the Fourth*, he salvaged those left-over bits of comedy from the *Famous Victories* which he had omitted to use in the *First Part*. The matter of the box on the ear, which had been completely passed over in the *First Part*, probably in deference to the fitness of things, was again alluded to in *2 Henry IV*,³⁵ and, more important than this, there was a revival of the highly effective episode in which the newly crowned Henry V banishes from him all the evil counselors of his youthful folly. With respect to these

³⁴ Cf. *Plays of Nathan Field*, ed. William Peery (Austin, Texas, 1950), p. 216.

³⁵ *2 Henry IV*, I, ii, 63-64; also V, ii, 80.

two details only is the *Second Part of Henry the Fourth* imitative of the *Famous Victories*. The comic scenes of the *First Part*, on the other hand, so closely parallel those of the *Famous Victories* that this play alone appears to represent Shakespeare's original rehandling of the old chronicle play which has come down to us as the *Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*.

DERIVATION OF THE HISTORY AND LEGEND OF SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE



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A NOTE ON SMOLLETT'S *DON QUIXOTE*

By EDWIN B. KNOWLES

In a recent article in *Modern Language Quarterly* Francesco Cordasco reviews the criticism of Smollett's translation of *Don Quixote* and offers a very favorable evaluation of its literary merits.¹ To some of his statements I should like to object.

My objection has nothing to do with Professor Cordasco's discovery of a letter supposedly written by Smollett to Don Ricardo Wall, in which Smollett admits that "my knowledge of the Language [Spanish] is modest, & that the work [of translation] was largely that of Isaiah Pettigrew" (p. 31). Unhappily this letter has turned out to be a forgery; so the moot question of how much of Smollett's translation is by Smollett remains unsettled.²

It is when Professor Cordasco sets out to show that "Isaiah Pettigrew was evidently a translator of high order" (p. 36) that his enthusiasm leads him into erroneous statements. Before he can maintain Pettigrew-Smollett's merits, he naturally has to repudiate the widely accepted belief that the translation was largely stolen from that of Charles Jarvis. Part of his method of doing this is to confuse the issue of Smollett's indebtedness to Jarvis by bringing in the name of the earlier translator Peter Motteux and suggesting that Motteux, like Jarvis, has been erroneously thought of as Smollett's source. I know of no modern scholar who attempts to prove such indebtedness to Motteux. Further, Cordasco's own interesting list of quotations from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century critics includes only one person (Henry Morley) who states that Motteux was drawn on. After quoting the "translator's aim" prefixed to the Smollett translation, Cordasco says: "Of the promised glossary, nothing, truly, is realized; the documentation is most meagre, and much of it seems suggested by the translation of Peter Motteux (London, 1770)" (p. 25). Note that no mention is made of Jarvis' footnotes. A review of the footnotes in the first half of the Motteux, Jarvis, and Smollett translations flatly contradicts Cordasco's statement. Motteux has only eighteen notes in all of Part I; Smollett, 109; Jarvis, 219. Actually, Smollett's footnotes are among the most original parts of the translation.³ Only fifteen are copied straight from Jarvis.⁴ Of the rest, thirty are in vary-

¹ "Smollett and the Translation of the *Don Quixote*," *MLQ*, XIII (1952), 23-36.

² See *PQ*, XXXI (1952), 299-300; also *MLQ*, XIV (1953), 228.

³ Also original, at least in terms of Jarvis, are the last three chapters of Part I and most of the poetry.

⁴ For example: Book III, Chap. 1: Jarvis: "*Tizona*: a romantic name given to the sword of Roderick Diaz de Bivar, the famous *Spanish* General against the Moors." Smollett: "*Tizona*, which is the word in the original, is a romantic name given to the sword that belonged to Roderick Diaz de Bivar, the famous Spanish general against the Moors."

ing ways parallel in content but somewhat different in phrasing. (Any count of this sort, naturally, presupposes a measure of personal interpretation.) The other sixty-four footnotes appear to be original. Smollett, clearly lacking the scholarly information that Jarvis could draw on, pads out many of his notes with rather obvious comments on such things as the dubbing of knights or the nature of a challenge; or he comments, often amusingly, on the course of the action or on traits of character. He obviously enjoyed pointing out where Cervantes nodded. Smollett, then, made no visible use of Motteux's notes, but he unquestionably made some use of Jarvis' notes.

In terms of the number of times his opinion has been referred to or quoted, A. F. Tytler (Lord Woodhouselee) can be said to have established the dictum that Smollett merely reworked the translation of Jarvis.⁶ Cordasco quotes from the relevant passages, but then discredits Tytler by saying, "But Tytler went on to no illustrations; he contented himself with the following comment . . ." (p. 32). Actually, Tytler's twenty-two parallel passages from Jarvis and Smollett, plus fourteen from Cervantes, form the most extensively documented comparison in existence, other than that by Carmine Linsalata, to be discussed later.

Toward the end of his article Professor Cordasco offers his opinion that "the Pettigrew-Smollett translation is one deserving of consideration in its own right and, upon examination, one singularly different from either that of Motteux or Jarvis" (p. 32). As proof he offers *one* set of prose passages from Motteux, Jarvis, Smollett, and Cervantes and two sets of verse passages. He concludes: "And the charge of Tytler, which in basis is the charge of all others, is seen false. All the translations are different . . . and a hundred passages randomly selected, would reveal the same disparities" (p. 33). Since Motteux has never been seriously considered as Smollett's source, it is, I repeat, deliberately confusing to bring him in. Of course, Motteux is different! So are Shelton and Phillips, for the good reason that Smollett made no use of them. To the uninitiated reader the quoted passages appear to prove Cordasco's point. Actually they do nothing of the sort. Even if twenty such sets of passages were set up—and very likely that many could be found (but *not* if "randomly selected")—Smollett's independence of Jarvis would be proved only for those twenty passages. In a matter of this sort the occasional differences are far less important than the presence of regular similarities. Any two translations, other than reprints, are bound to differ in many details. Naturally Smollett made some effort to appear original, though one is amazed at what he dared try to get away with. *Don Quixote* is a very long work. It is this very length that trapped Smollett and, one must presume, misled Cordasco. For the evidence, when the *whole* works are compared, piles up to the point where it is incontrovertible.

⁶ Alexander Fraser Tytler (Lord Woodhouselee), *Essay on the Principles of Translation*, Everyman's Library, pp. 150-75. First published in 1791.

It is time to speak of another study of the Jarvis-Smollett relationship, Professor Linsalata's "Smollett's Indebtedness to Jarvis' Translation of *Don Quixote*," which appeared in *Symposium*.⁶ To the best of my knowledge Linsalata's doctoral dissertation,⁷ which provided the basis for the article in *Symposium*, is the only complete, line-by-line comparison ever attempted for the entire Jarvis, Smollett, and Cervantes *Don Quixotes*. Since extended collation (in this instance over 400 typewritten pages) makes dull reading, it is not surprising that Linsalata could find no publisher for anything but a digested version of his book. It is quite understandable that Professor Cordasco has not seen this unpublished thesis, but his treatment of the article, which he has seen, is cavalier. He does not refer to Linsalata's study until the closing footnote; then he refers to it as "an extensive citation of parallel passages postulated on the unfortunate etymological evidences of Gustav Becker. . . . Evidently Becker's important monograph was unknown to Professor Linsalata; it is nowhere mentioned in his paper" (p. 36). That Linsalata could "postulate" his work on Becker's without knowing it is interesting, but beside the point. To begin with, it is misleading to wrap Becker up in the phrase "unfortunate etymological evidences." Becker employs the word *etymologisch* only once while in the course of demonstrating just one of several differences between Smollett's and Jarvis' methods: Smollett, he claims, more often than Jarvis employed homonyms (*salutifero-salutiferous*, *beneficio-benefit*, etc.).⁸ Except that Becker uses shorter passages for comparison, his method as a whole is no more "etymological" than Cordasco's. If Becker is "unfortunate," it is chiefly because he spends only four pages on his entire discussion of Smollett (much less than Tytler), and because, as Cordasco himself says, Becker is "hazy" and "confused" (p. 29). Linsalata's study owes nothing to Becker. It is not "etymological." However, it is complete and the only dependable job extant. Since Linsalata's article in *Symposium* (a condensed analysis of over 300 passages parallel in varying degrees) is easily available, there is no need to summarize it here. It demonstrates beyond any reasonable doubt that the bulk of the Smollett translation was a poorly disguised theft from that of Jarvis. Cordasco's three sets of passages demonstrate only that on occasion Smollett could rephrase Jarvis and produce a more pleasant English style. They are completely inadequate to support any claim that Smollett or Pettigrew made an honest and original translation. Linsalata's evidence is overwhelming on that score.

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⁶ IV (1950), 84-106.

⁷ Tobias Smollett and Charles Jarvis: Translators of *Don Quixote*, University of Texas diss., 1949.

⁸ Gustav Becker, *Die Aufnahme des Don Quijote in die englische Literatur (1605 bis ca. 1770)* (Berlin, 1906), pp. 19-20.

HENRY FIELDING'S GRUB-STREET OPERA

By JACK RICHARD BROWN

Numerous scholars have dealt recently with the problems of Henry Fielding's career as a satiric dramatist immediately before the Licensing Act of 1737. Partly because of the inaccessibility of the printed versions, however, relatively little attention has been given to the dramatist's first sustained venture in political satire, *The Welsh Opera* (1731), later published as *The Grub-Street Opera*, the occasion of Fielding's initial encounter with the Lord Chamberlain's office. The present paper is an attempt to trace the stage history of the play, to examine critically the three printed versions on which any conclusions about it must be based, and to indicate the significance of this work in any study of Fielding and the theater. The three versions are: *The Welsh Opera* (London, 1731), never reprinted;¹ *The Genuine Grub-Street Opera* (London, 1731), never reprinted; and *The Grub-Street Opera* (London, 1731), the text universally followed in later editions.

The general outlines of *The Welsh Opera* may be suggested briefly: the play is a broad political satire, with a complex allegory in which may be distinguished George II, Queen Caroline, Prince Frederick, Sir Robert Walpole, William Pulteney, and others prominent in the public life of England. The original title is not easily explained. Cross² assumes that it may be attributed to the broken English of both the king and the queen, and there is perhaps some truth in this. I am more inclined to believe, however, that Fielding was thinking of the hidden and deliberately jumbled allegory in his play, and of a specialized meaning of the word "Welsh" as "a strange language; speech one does not understand."³

It is probable, certainly, that the reason for the title of the opera was not clear even in Fielding's day, and the change to *The Grub-Street Opera* may indicate that the earlier name had missed fire. In his new title, Fielding was not only satirizing hack-writers and critics in general, but was presenting a clear challenge to the editors of the *Grub-Street Journal*, Richard Russell and John Martyn, and to whatever patrons these gentlemen might have.⁴

The stage history of *The Welsh Opera* begins with an announcement in the *Daily Post*, April 17, 1731, that it would be performed at the New Theater in the Hay Market as an afterpiece to *The Tragedy of Tragedies* on the following Wednesday, April 21. On the date set

¹ *The Welsh Opera, or The Grey Mare The Better Horse* (London, 1731). There were at least two printings, with slight variants on the title pages. A copy of the play in the Huntington Library has one title page; a copy in the library of Yale University has another.

² Wilbur L. Cross, *History of Henry Fielding* (New Haven, 1918), I, 105-106.

³ OED.

⁴ For a history of this periodical, and a discussion of its attack on Fielding, see James T. Hillhouse, *The Grub-Street Journal* (Durham, N.C., 1928).

for performance, however, the following announcement appeared at the bottom of the advertisement: "N.B. The Welch Opera not being entirely ready, we are oblig'd to defer Playing till tomorrow, and tickets deliver'd out for the Benefit of the Author for this day will be taken then."⁸

A playbill in the Latreille Collection in the British Museum provides additional evidence for establishing April 22 as the date of the first performance: "Th. April 22. Benefit of the Author. Tragedy of Tragedies—9th time—To which will be added, never performed before The Welch Opera—Boxes 5s Pit 3s."⁹

Nine subsequent performances are recorded in the *Daily Post* and in the Latreille Collection, on the following dates: April 23, 26, 28; May 19, 26, 27; June 1, 2, 4. I shall discuss the matter of these dates in detail, since I know of no work in which they are correctly recorded.⁷

On Friday, April 23, Monday, April 26, and Wednesday, April 28, *The Welsh Opera* was played in its original form as an afterpiece to the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth performances of *The Tragedy of Tragedies*.⁸ The playbill for this last performance indicates that the double bill was proving a popular entertainment, and that Mullart was scoring a hit in the part of Robin:

Wednesday, April 28. Benefit of the Author. The tragedy of Tragedies—12th time—and The Welch Opera—4th time. Robin=Mullart. Note. There being so great a demand for places Pit and Boxes will be laid together. No persons to be admitted but by printed Tickets which will be delivered at the Office at 5s. each.⁹

In spite of the apparent popularity of the performance, there is no further mention of *The Welsh Opera* until Wednesday, May 19, when it appeared "with alterations and additions." What changes Fielding may have made in the play we cannot know. The playbill for the day furnishes us the information that the performance was for the benefit of Mr. and Mrs. Mullart, who played King Arthur and Queen Dollalolla in *The Tragedy of Tragedies*, and Robin and Susan in *The Welsh Opera*.¹⁰ A week later, May 26, *The Welsh Opera* was performed again, this time as an afterpiece to the seventh performance of *The Fall of Mortimer*, a revised version of the play by William Mountfort.¹¹ *The Fall of Mortimer* was itself a piece of distinct political propaganda, and was ultimately stopped by the government.¹²

On Thursday, May 27, both plays were again presented, but for

⁸ *Daily Post*, April 21, 1731.

⁹ Frederick Latreille, *Play Bills of London Theatres*, British Museum Add. MSS 32,249-32,252. No. 32,250, Vol. II, fol. 378b (1731).

⁷ In Allardyce Nicoll, *History of Early Eighteenth Century Drama* (Cambridge, 1925), the dates are given as follows: April 22, 23, 26, 28; May 17, 19, 26; June 1, 2, 4. Appendix C, p. 324.

⁸ *Daily Post*, April 23, 24, 26, 27, 28.

⁹ Latreille, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰ *Idem.*

¹¹ *Daily Post*, May 26.

¹² Cross, *op. cit.*, I, 111-12.

Friday the 28th we find notice of only *The Fall of Mortimer*; for some reason *The Welsh Opera* was omitted on this date.¹³ On Saturday, May 29, the *Daily Post* carried an advertisement for *The Fall of Mortimer* "to appear on Tuesday next, 1 June," but there is no mention of *The Welsh Opera*. The issue of Monday, May 31, tells us, however, that "tomorrow . . . *The Welch Opera* will be added" to the performance of *Mortimer*, and the plays were performed three times during that same week: Tuesday the 1st, Wednesday the 2nd, and Friday the 4th.¹⁴

Fielding now apparently determined to rewrite and lengthen *The Welsh Opera*, and on Saturday, June 5, the *Daily Post* carried the following notice along with the advertisement for *The Fall of Mortimer*: "N.B. There being a great Demand for the Welch Opera, we are obliged to advertise the Town, that it being now made into a whole Night's Entertainment, intituled, *The Grub-street Opera*, now in Rehearsal, it cannot possibly be performed any longer with this Play."

On the following Monday, June 7, *The Grub-Street Opera* was announced in the *Daily Post* for performance "on Friday next, being the 11th of June." This advertisement was repeated on Tuesday and Thursday, and on the latter day the *Grub-Street Journal* took the occasion to answer the satire implied in Fielding's new title:

Whereas our good friend Mr. SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS hath composed an Entertainment, called *The Grub-Street Opera*, which he intends to exhibit at our Theatre in the Hay-market, tomorrow the 11th instant; and as we do presume the said Opera is calculated for the propagation of our Society, we have thought fit to publish these our orders, strictly charging all our Members to assemble at the sign of the Cock and Bottle, an Alehouse at Charing-Cross, between the hours of three and four, thence to proceed in a body to the said Theatre; and that Mr. SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS do take care, that a great chair be provided for ourself in the Front-box, and to give his attendance to conduct us thereto; and that all our members be received and placed with that respect which is due to them.

Bavius¹⁵

This is almost certainly not to be taken seriously, and even had *The Grub-Street Opera* not been postponed, it is extremely doubtful that there would have been any organized claque against it. It is quite possible, however, that the *Grub-Street Journal* feared that Fielding's opera might be an attack, not on the hacks of Grub Street, but on the *Journal* itself.

On Friday, the 11th, the day set for performance, the *Daily Post* announced that:

At the New Theatre in the Haymarket, this present Friday, being the 11th Day of June, will be presented
The Grub-Street Opera.

Written by Scriblerus Secundus.

¹³ *Daily Post*, May 27, 28.

¹⁴ *Daily Post*, June 1, 2, 3, 4.

¹⁵ *Grub-Street Journal*, No. 75 (June 10, 1731).

At Common Prices, viz.

Box 4s. Pit 2s6d. Gall. 1s6d.

By Reason of the length of the Days none but the
Gallery Doors will be opened till half an hour after five,
and the Opera will begin exactly at Seven.

The House is extraordinarily cool.

It was at this point that something interfered to keep *The Grub-Street Opera* from the stage. In all likelihood this something was the government, which, already stung by *The Welsh Opera*, was taking no chances on a more extended attack. When *The Welsh Opera* was published a short time later, the preface declared: "As the Performance of the Grubstreet Opera has been prevented, by a certain Influence which has been very prevailing of late years, we thought it would not be unacceptable to the Town, if we communicated to them the *Welch Opera*. . . ."

On Saturday, June 12, *The Grub-Street Opera* was announced for the following Monday, and the illness of one of the actors was given as the reason for the postponement.¹⁶ It is not unlikely that at this time Fielding still had hope that the Lord Chamberlain would permit his play to be acted, but by Monday, the 14th, he apparently realized that his cause was lost, and the *Daily Post*, at the bottom of an advertisement for *The Fall of Mortimer*, carried the following: "Note, We are oblig'd to defer the Grubstreet Opera till further Notice."

With this laconic announcement, the stage history of Fielding's first venture into extended political satire comes to a close. When the dramatist published *The Grub-Street Opera* some time later, he put on the title page, "As it is acted at the theatre in the Haymarket," and Genest includes a record of performance,¹⁷ but there is no corroborative evidence whatever for the belief that the play was ever presented.

II

A letter, almost certainly by Fielding, published in the *Daily Post* for June 28, 1731, adds an interesting complication to the whole matter of *The Welsh Opera* and *The Grub-Street Opera*. On June 26, without Fielding's authority, a certain bookseller named Rayner published a version of *The Welsh Opera*. Two days later there appeared in the *Daily Post* a letter revealing sufficient characteristics of Fielding to enable us to ascribe it to him with considerable certainty:

Whereas one Rayner hath published a strange Medley of nonsense under the title of the "Welch Opera," said to be written by the Author of "The Tragedy of Tragedies," and also hath impudently affirmed that this was great part of the "Grub Street Opera," which he attempts to insinuate was stopt by Authority: This is to assure the Town that what he hath published is a very incorrect and spurious edition of the "Welch Opera," a very small part of which was originally written by the said Author and that it contains scarce anything of the "Grub St.

¹⁶ *Daily Post*, June 12.

¹⁷ John Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage* (Bath, 1832), III, 323.

Opera," excepting the names of some of the characters and a few of the Songs. This latter piece hath in it above 50 entire new songs; and is so far from being stopt by Authority (for which there could be no manner of reason) that it is only postponed to a proper time when it is not doubted but the Town will be convinced how little the performance agrees with the intolerable and scandalous nonsense of this notorious Paper Pyrate.¹⁸

This letter introduces a number of difficult and interesting problems. First, we are presented with a perplexing dilemma in the statement that the author of *The Tragedy of Tragedies* was the original author of only "a very small part" of *The Welsh Opera*. Either this is a misstatement, or Fielding is guilty of a rather flagrant bit of plagiarism in *The Grub-Street Opera*. If, as is virtually certain, Fielding himself was the author of the letter in question, what motive could he have had for denying *The Welsh Opera* as his own? Only one possibility suggests itself, and that is that in his desire to revenge himself on that "notorious Paper Pyrate," Rayner, and to hinder as much as possible the sale of *The Welsh Opera*, Fielding was willing to throw every doubt on the authenticity of the published play. This, be it admitted, is not an entirely satisfactory explanation; yet the only apparent alternative is to assume that Fielding, when he wrote *The Grub-Street Opera*, appropriated the work of another, failing at any time in his life to acknowledge the help of a collaborator in the preparation of *The Welsh Opera*.¹⁹ This, I believe, is extremely improbable; and a careful comparison of the two plays, and a study of Fielding's other dramatic work, will lead to the conclusion that *The Welsh Opera* is clearly enough Fielding's own production.

Second, we are naturally curious as to the alleged "incorrectness" of the published *Welsh Opera*. There is now no way of determining the truth of the matter, but whether or not Rayner's version of the play was an accurate copy of what Fielding had written, the dramatist had at least one sure cause for complaint: his lost profits. Inasmuch as he himself had had nothing to do with the publication of the play, he was naturally not in a position to claim any money, and this in itself would have been cause enough for his outburst at Rayner. The letter has the appearance, too, of an obvious "puff-preliminary" to *The Grub-Street Opera*.

Finally, when Fielding denies that *The Grub-Street Opera* was "stopt by Authority," we must suspect him of telling something more—or less—than the truth. Obviously, the play had been ready for the stage; obviously, too, it would have been considerably better entertainment than the brief *Welsh Opera*. We know that the government was

¹⁸ *Daily Post*, June 28, 1731. I am indebted to Professor Charles Burton Woods, who called my attention to this letter some years ago.

¹⁹ It is of course possible that Fielding was making use of a not uncommon device of this time and would have been ready to protest that as the idea or suggestion of such a work as *The Grub-Street Opera* may have come to him from someone else, he could in truth be called the "author" of only "a very small part" of that play.

active at this time in suppressing unfavorable propaganda, and that *The Fall of Mortimer* was itself forced off the stage. By December of this same year (1731), moreover, the persecution of the government forced Fielding to give up the theater in the Haymarket and to make a new contract with Drury Lane. The evidence for governmental suppression of *The Grub-Street Opera* is, I think, conclusive. What Fielding's motive (assuming that he did write the letter) may have been in denying this, we can only conjecture. It is not impossible that he contemplated a revision of the play, to enable it to pass the censor, or that he hoped by the use of "influence" to have the performance allowed. It is likely, too, that at this time Fielding was not as proud as he might later have been at having his work considered dangerous to the government, and that he was anxious to steer a middle course and to leave the way open for a later reconciliation with the ministry. There is the additional possibility (which would explain Fielding's apparent duplicity) that the government had merely warned him that the opera most probably would be stopped, if he ventured to produce it, and that, not desiring to run this risk, he had canceled the performance of his own accord.

III

The central theme of *The Welsh Opera*, expanded in *The Grub-Street Opera*, is the mismanagement of a household by its servants, a palpable allegory on the ministry of Sir Robert Walpole.²⁰ As has been noted, the publisher's preface to *The Welsh Opera* speaks of *The Grub-Street Opera*'s having been suppressed by "a certain Influence which has been very prevailing of late years," a charge which is denied in the letter to the *Daily Post*. Whatever is the truth of the matter, there can be no doubt that the allegory, obscure now, must have been clearly evident to an audience of 1731. The wife, Mrs. Apshinken, dominates her family just as Queen Caroline was thought to dominate the royal family; both she and her husband quarrel with their son Owen, just as the king and queen quarreled with the Prince of Wales; Robin, the butler, is cheating and tricking his masters, just as Robert Walpole was alleged to be deceiving the king and the country; and William, the coachman, is trying to get Robin's place, just as William Pulteney was attempting to make himself first minister. The whole thing is done in a tone of light-hearted banter, and it is apparent that Fielding was far more interested in writing a clever play than in carrying the flag for any political faction. He pictures Walpole as a dishonest servant, it is true, but the other servants (that is, the Opposition) are less dishonest only because they have had less chance

²⁰ *The Welsh Opera* contains only one notable element not adopted by *The Grub-Street Opera*; this is the part played by Goody Scratch, a witch, who, when her true nature is discovered, is forced to save herself by revealing what she knows of the past life of the other characters. All are of noble birth, she tells them, and each of the men has been left a fortune by an uncle. This is obviously burlesque of forced "happy endings" in romance and drama, but Fielding evidently felt that it could not be included satisfactorily in the revised version of his play.

for being so, and they are all merely envious of Robin's position. Indeed, says Fielding: "if all my master's ancestors had met with as good servants as Robin, he had enjoyed a better estate than he hath now."²¹

This certainly is a remark definitely calculated to soothe whatever injured feelings the ministry might have had as a result of the play's satire. And it is just as certainly not a remark which would lead us to believe that Fielding was in 1731 a rabid supporter of the Opposition.

Lacking the manuscript, or the prompter's copy of the play, we can only conjecture what differences there may have been in the opera as it was intended to be acted and as it was finally published. It is not unlikely that the authorized published version was toned down somewhat in an attempt to make the play appear as innocent as possible. There were two published versions of *The Grub-Street Opera*, a comparison of which yields a substantial amount of significant information. Of the two editions, the first was published August 19, 1731,²² "For the benefit of the comedians at the new theatre in the Hay Market"; the second was published later in the summer or autumn, by J. Roberts, Fielding's own publisher.²³ It is impossible to account in any positive manner for the publication of the first edition, which was titled *The Genuine Grub-Street Opera*, and carried the caption, "As it was acted at the new theatre in the Haymarket." The omission of the printer's or the publisher's name, however, coupled with the always suspicious word "genuine" and the fact that Fielding found it necessary to bring out a corrected edition not long afterward, lends itself to the belief that this is merely one more example of book piracy. It is not unlikely that a few of the actors, chagrined at the play's being stopped (if, indeed, this was the case), determined to derive some income from the work and communicated their own copies to the publisher. It is now impossible to determine if the initial idea of publication came from printer, actor, or bookseller. Yet a detailed examination of the differences to be found in the two editions of *The Grub-Street Opera* will prove of considerable significance. For convenience, we may designate the editions: *W*=*The Welsh Opera*; *G*=*The Genuine Grub-Street Opera*; *R*=*The Grub-Street Opera*.

We need read no further than the *dramatis personae* to detect interesting variations. In *W* and in *G* we find that John is the coachman, in love with Betty, and that William is the groom. In *R* John is the groom, in love with Margery, and William is the coachman. Betty, curiously enough, though included in the *dramatis personae* of *G*, has no part in the play; in *W* she has but one line; her name is omitted in *R*. In *G*, moreover, we find that in II, iv, John, although

²¹ *The Grub-Street Opera*, I, v.

²² *Grub-Street Journal*.

²³ I have been unable to discover any newspaper reference for the publication of this edition.

listed in the dramatis personae as "John the coachman," speaks of himself as "John the groom." Now the simplest explanation of all this, while by no means the only possible one, is perhaps the best. That is, that the variations of *G* and *W* from *R* are simply printer's errors, quite naturally corrected in the final authorized edition. Betty was probably included in the earliest draft of the play, but omitted later, possibly from reasons of economy, or because it was thought that her part cluttered up the play without adding anything essential.

The Introductions²⁴ to *G* and *R* reveal that, while the opening and closing lines are practically identical, the intervening material is quite different, and was evidently carefully revised before the publication of *R*. An adequate explanation of this is not easily found, especially since both the matter and the manner remain substantially the same, and in both versions we have pointed satire on the hack-writers of Grub Street. It might be believed that the final version, *R*, represents the Introduction as it always did stand, and that *G* is simply a garbled version reproduced from memory, but the style of *G* is obviously that of Fielding throughout; this explanation would, moreover, fail to account for the exact similarity of the opening and the close in the two editions.

In I, ii, occur two instances of lines in which, while the sense is the same, the words are a bit different:

- I. *G* LADY AP. I have always had an inclination to serve the church.
R LADY AP. I have always had an inclination to maintain religion in the parish.
- II. *G* LADY AP. Five of the maids I think you have already asked in church; and I believe you will find no great difficulty to prevail on the others.
R LADY AP. I think you have already asked them all in the church, so that you have only to hasten the match.

These variations, while it is not impossible that they were made by Fielding himself, seem suspiciously like the type of error which might have arisen had *G* been printed from the actors' memory, or, perhaps, from a copy taken at a rehearsal. This last is mere conjecture, however, and the relative unimportance of the play and its author at this time makes it extremely improbable that any such copy should have been made.

Two obviously apologetic passages, inserted in *R* but lacking in *G*, are found in I, v. The first of these is in conversation between Sweetissa and Margery:

- SWEET. I know you are prejudiced against him [Robin] from what William says; but be assured that is all malice; he is desirous of getting his place.
 MARG. I rather think that a prejudice of yours against William.
 SWEET. O Margery, Margery! an upper servant's honesty is never so conspicuous, as when he is abused by the under servants.—They must rail at son one, and if they abuse him, he preserves his master and mistress from abuse

²⁴ Part of the acted play.

The other passage (noted above) is also in a speech by Sweetissa, at the close of a satirical song: "But I don't speak this on Robin's account! for if all my master's ancestors had met with as good servants as Robin, he had enjoyed a better estate than he hath now."

Here, clearly enough, Fielding is softening the printed version of the play in order to make it appear as nonpartisan as possible. Satire which might be endured on the stage has something of a different appearance in print, and the dramatist may well have felt the need for such conciliatory passages. It is quite likely, too, that Fielding, at this time more a looker-on at politics than an active participant in party warfare, was not overjoyed at finding his play taken as an outright attack on the ministry, and was not averse to revealing a measure of sympathy with the government.

Scene vii provides a most interesting variation, revealing that while *G* has followed *The Welsh Opera*, *R*, except for the opening and closing lines, has been completely revised. The rest of the first act reveals only one additional variant of importance; this is in Scene xi, when parts of Robin's speeches and a whole speech by Sweetissa are omitted from *G*. There is nothing to prove whether the lines found in *R* were written before the publication of the *G* text and either deliberately or inadvertently omitted, or whether they represent an addition to the play made immediately before the printing of *R*.

Act II presents one of the most interesting and most perplexing problems in the study of these two editions of *The Grub-Street Opera*. In *G* the act consists of six scenes; in *R* there are two additional scenes, one at the opening and one at the close of the act. The numbering of scenes in *G*, however, is 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; that is, the second scene of *G*, which is the third scene of *R*, is also marked 3 in *G*. This is highly suspicious and lends weight to the theory that *G* was printed only from partial or imperfect copies of the play, plus, perhaps, the actors' memory. Such a theory would account for the missing scenes and also for the curious numbering: the publishers of *G*, although lacking Scene i, simply failed to make the necessary corrections, and while naturally labeling the first scene of a new act as Scene i, made no other changes. It cannot be denied, of course, that the two new scenes of *R* may well have been written by Fielding after the publication of *G*, and the fact that they are added, one at the beginning and one at the close of an act, logical places for expansion, would lend itself to this explanation.

There are six major alterations in Act III, chiefly in the matter of songs. *G* omits one song of Susan's, a stanza from one of Robin's songs, and one from a song of Sir Owen's. There are also alterations in another of Robin's songs and in one of Owen's. The only other variant worthy of note is the omission in *G* of a speech by William; it is probable that this is no more than a printer's error.

It is the large number of songs, of course, which, aside from the political allegory, provide by far the most entertaining feature of *The*

Grub-Street Opera. The *Welsh Opera* contained thirty-one airs,²⁸ *The Genuine Grub-Street Opera* fifty-seven, and the final version a total of sixty-five. More than a few of the songs are of real merit, and one, at least, has become well known; this is "The Roast Beef of Old England," which Fielding set to a stirring tune, and also included in his later play, *Don Quixote in England*.

To conclude, it is important to bear in mind that Fielding's first attempt at direct political satire found him very largely nonpartisan and distinctly light-hearted. He is simply an entertaining young man, bantering the politics and politicians of his time with little regard to "sides" or governmental principles. His satire is aimed at corrupt practices in general and, most of all, at those who take this whole matter of politics too seriously. Subsequent events brought about a steady development in the dramatist's political point of view, and by the time of the plays of 1736-1737, Fielding was a satirist no longer nonpartisan and no longer light-hearted, but rather one who had become a serious advocate of political reform and of the overthrow of the Walpole government.

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²⁸ In the *Welsh Opera*, two airs are marked XXVI; consequently the airs are numbered only to XXX.

LESYA UKRAINKA AND DON JUAN

By CLARENCE A. MANNING

Among the numerous treatments of the theme of Don Juan in the twentieth century, the *Stone Master* (*Kamenny Hospodar*) by the Ukrainian poetess Lesya Ukrainka holds a prominent place. At one and the same time it follows closely the outline of the old story and it fills it with a new psychological content in which the flirtations of Don Juan are intricately combined with a discussion of the real meaning of liberty and power. It is an excellent example of the methods of this poetess of treating in a story drawn from literature the serious problems of the present.

Lesya Ukrainka, the penname of Larysa Kosacheva (1873-1913), was of a highly educated Ukrainian family. Her mother was a distinguished (if not a great) writer and was the editor of a periodical. Her mother's brother, Michael Drahomanov, was one of the leading scholars of the day. After he had been compelled to leave his post at the University of Kiev, he lived in Switzerland and finally died as a professor at the University of Sofia in Bulgaria, where his grandson Dimitar Shishmanov became one of the leading exponents in Bulgarian literature of modern European thought and was one of the first to be executed during the Communist occupation.

With this cultural background, Lesya Ukrainka at an early age learned to read easily all the important European languages. An invalid from tuberculosis, she was unable to move around freely, and so her works reflect far more the world of books than they do her external experience. But her mind grasped the essential problems of the present, and in an unusual way she found an opportunity of expressing through literary models advanced thoughts on those ideas which her compatriots were clothing in pictures of the present.

Since this poetic drama has not been translated into English, it may not be out of place to summarize it briefly. As the play opens, Donna Anna is on the eve of her public betrothal to the Commander, Don Gonzago de Mendoza. While going with a friend Dolores to a cemetery, she meets Don Juan. Dolores is passionately devoted to Don Juan with whom she has exchanged rings, even though she knows that there will never be a marriage and that she has nothing to hope for. Dolores is one of those women who are born to be martyrs and who realize one can never expect true love to be returned. In a sense she is dissatisfied with Donna Anna, for she knows that Donna Anna can never achieve full happiness with the stony and rigid Commander. Donna Anna is at once attracted by Don Juan and invites him that same evening to the formal party announcing her betrothal. Don Juan accepts, and amid the gaiety and the meeting with various old flames, he seizes the opportunity to impress upon her the idea that she should

break the chains that are being wrapped around her and flee with him. At the moment Donna Anna refuses, and despite the fact that the custom of Seville allows certain freedom of conversation at a betrothal, the Commander is angered that his future bride should talk seriously to any one but himself. Don Juan, pursued by his enemies, returns to Cadiz, and there he is visited by Dolores, who has restored him to the good favor of both state and church by becoming a nun to pray unceasingly for his soul and to risk for him the hell fire which he has deserved. She tells him also of the unhappiness of Donna Anna in her married life. Again a grandee of Spain, Don Juan returns to Madrid and makes his way into the home of Donna Anna. When the Commander discovers Donna Anna and Don Juan engaged in conversation, he draws his sword and Don Juan slays him. Later he meets Donna Anna in the cemetery. She feels the same fascination for him as before and invites him to a dinner at her home, a visit about which Don Juan informs the statue of the Commander. The next evening the dinner takes place. The De Mendoza clan are angered at the appearance of Don Juan and leave. Then Anna outlines her future plans which will make Don Juan also a commander and satisfy his aspirations. When he puts on the hat and cloak of his dead rival, he realizes with horror that he has lost himself. Then the Commander steps out of his portrait and administers the death blow, while Anna falls fainting at the Commander's feet.

Soviet scholars lay great weight on the relationship between this work and Pushkin's *Stone Guest* (*Kamennyi Gost'*), but the spirit and the content are entirely different. The Don Juan of Pushkin is a type of loving and lovable immaturity, a form of Evgeny Onyegin, in love with love and all ladies who can represent love.¹ He is a transition between the frivolous and sentimental libertine conceived by Mozart and the avid seeker for a supreme good imagined by the Romantics.² Nevertheless A. Hozenpud in his introduction to the dramatic works of Lesya emphasizes the similarity and even finds the influence of Pushkin in the name of the piece. He equates *gost'*, and *hospodar*,³ although here, as in ordinary Ukrainian, *hospodar* means *master*,⁴ as is clearly implied in Don Juan's addressing the statue (p. 319).

The chief point of similarity between the two works is to be found in the fact that the Ukrainian poetess, like Pushkin, treats Donna Anna not as the daughter but as the wife of the Commander. We may also find an influence in the kind of secluded life that she is compelled to lead as the wife, but the motives are different. In Pushkin the Commander is moved by jealousy to hide his wife,⁵ whereas in Lesya

¹ C. A. Manning, "Russian Versions of Don Juan," *PMLA*, XXXVIII (1923), 482 ff.

² Georges Gendarme de Bévotte, *La Légende de Don Juan* (Paris, 1911), II, 13.

³ Lesya Ukrainka, *Teatr* (Kyiv, 1946), p. 27.

⁴ B. Hrinchenko, *Slovar' Ukrainskoi Movy* (Kyiv, 1909), I, 359.

⁵ Pushkin, *Kamennyi Gost'*, in *Sobranie Sochineniy* (Nerlib, 1921), III, 438.

Ukrainka the Commander is motivated by the rigid rules of etiquette (pp. 292 f.).

It is very obvious that Lesya Ukrainka drew upon Western sources for her work, probably the French or through the French. Thus whereas the hero of Pushkin is Don Huan with the Spanish pronunciation, Lesya Ukrainka, like Count Alexis K. Tolstoy, uses the French form Zhuan and in a footnote to the *dramatis personae* says: "I have used the French and not the Spanish name, for it has been consecrated by the century-long tradition in world literature. For the same reason I have used the Italian form of the word 'dona'" (p. 232). We can see another indication of this in the name of Don Juan's valet, Sganarelle. This is the traditional French form from the time of Molière, and it contrasts sharply with that of Leporello used both by Pushkin and by Tolstoy. Finally the poetess was distinctly aware of the two stories that were fused together by Merimée, that of Don Juan Tenorio and of Don Juan de Marañón,⁶ for in the final scene Donna Anna presents to her late husband's clan "Senor de Marañón, Marquis de Tenorio" (p. 324).

In a letter to Olha Kobylyanska of May 9, 1913, Lesya Ukrainka summarizes her own views on the play.

I did not intend to add anything new to the established type of Don Juan in literature, except to emphasize the anarchism of his character. . . . Donna Anna, it seemed to me, has taken a much greater place in the drama than I had intended but the Commander, I fear, has come out too schematically, more as a symbol than a living being. I am sorry that I could not represent Dolores so that she would not be a pale shadow of Donna Anna, for that was not my intention and I even once thought who was to be the main heroine of the poem, she or Donna Anna, and I gave the preference to Donna Anna not out of sympathy (Dolores is nearer to my soul), but from the feeling of truth, for it happens in life that people like Dolores must pass under the shadow of the Annas and become sacrifices, if not of Don Juans, then of their own superhuman exaltation; they are the type of the born martyr, who must perish on the cross, even though they have to nail themselves there, if there is a lack of hangmen's hands. . . . Nothing of "stone" has power over her. The established forms are for her only local formulas. . . . But the fact that in those "forms" there is something of "stone," oppressing, fettering their freedom, cannot fail to have an influence on their souls.⁷

The role of Dolores is perhaps the most original in the play. There is no one exactly like her in Pushkin's version, although she does have many of the same qualities as the Donna Anna of Tolstoy. Yet there is some trace of such a character in all of those versions in which Don Juan is finally saved.⁸ However, Dolores cannot be regarded only as the type of girl whose perfect innocence can heal the passions of Don Juan. She is, as Lesya Ukrainka rightly explains, the type of the born martyr, who, after her disappointment, is able to lose herself fully in her devotion to God for the soul of Don Juan. Her love for him is so

⁶ Gendarme de Béville, *op. cit.*, II, 2 ff.

⁷ Lesya Ukrainka, *Teatr*, pp. 27 f.

⁸ Gendarme de Béville, *op. cit.*, II, 39 ff.

overpowering that it finally burns itself into her soul and drives out even her desire to be his wife or mistress. Her relationship to him passes from the desire to serve his living being, as it is when he meets her in the first scene, to an utter absorption in his eternal well-being, as it is when she comes to tell him of her success in saving him and in restoring him from a bandit to his former high social position.

In a sense she is the very opposite of the Commander, who fully incarnates the established order. Don Gonzago de Mendoza is wholly conscious of the burdens and the responsibilities which he has assumed in his post, and he is not slow in telling them to his wife. "Do not forget that the Commander's cloak came to me not by requests, not by money, not by violence, but by honor. All of us De Mendozas have from old times been knights without fear, ladies without shame" (p. 294). Or again, "I ask you to remember that to us belongs the first place everywhere, for we can occupy it worthily, and no one can take our place—not only the honor of the De Mendozas answers for it but the noble banner of my order. If not only Donna Concepcion but the queen wishes to forget this, I, without delay, will leave the court" (p. 295). It is this unyielding attitude that inspires him in all his dealings with his fiancée and wife and leads him to say, "It is not love to fear an oath" (p. 251). By his own lights the Commander is an upright man, because he cannot tolerate any variation in the settled order of things.

That leads us to consider the relations of Donna Anna and Don Juan. As a young girl, Donna Anna has the usual romantic dreams. She sees herself in a high tower from which only a true knight can free her. When Dolores interprets this dream as meaning that the knights who failed were her unsuccessful suitors, Donna Anna answers with a smile, "No, my Commander is the mountain and there is no happy knight, anywhere in the world" (p. 244). It does not take Don Juan long either at their first meeting at the ball, or at her home later, to realize that she cannot be happy with this thought in her mind. She makes it clear to Don Juan that in her dreams she has the same vision as he, but she has not the courage to break with the world around her and to go away for good. At the same time she has the intellectual keenness to realize the fallacy in Don Juan's pleas, for when she asks him to give up Dolores' ring, he claims that his honor will not allow him to do so. She understands then that Don Juan's ideals are not even to himself as powerful as he had dreamed (p. 275). Later she can tell him that the regime under which she lives with the Commander can turn her heart to stone, for it is too late to save the princess (p. 303). Don Juan cannot believe it, and he is right. At his embrace she comes back to her dreams, but her life experience has taught her the bitter truth which she can tell Don Juan, "There is no freedom without authority" (p. 329). Donna Anna can draw the comparison. She has seen the freedom of Don Juan before he recovered his position, when he was hiding in a cave attended only by Dolores; she has seen

the power of the Commander and his freedom derived from his stony adherence to order, and she dreams that there may be something in between, some way in which the human virtues may be able to function and develop without denying either one of the principal terms. That is the root of her actions.

Don Juan is the typical Romantic mixture of the cynic and the idealist. He has lost count of his conquests, but they have already included, to the knowledge of Dolores, a Gypsy girl who left her tribe for him, a Moorish girl who for him became a Christian and a nun, a Spanish infanta of the royal blood, the daughter of a Toledo rabbi who gave up her faith and later drowned herself, and an abbess who broke her vows and ran a tavern for smugglers.⁸ There are countless Spanish girls such as Donna Sol', but Don Juan can say proudly, "I gave every time to them all that they could sustain: a dream, a short time of happiness and excitements, and no one could stand any more and this was too much for some" (p. 284). Only Donna Anna can look him in the eye and say that she is not afraid of him, for her dreams are as boundless as his own.

He craves freedom from all bonds and he says:

Believe me, Donna Anna! he only is free from social fetters, whom society rejects, and I compelled them to reject me. You have seen a man who going with the sincere voice of his own heart has never asked, "What do people say?" Look, that is I. This world has never been a prison to me. I flew over the seas in a light felucca like a flying bird. I learned the beauty of distant shores and the charm of a still unknown land. With a bright freedom all lands are good, all waters are fit to reflect the sky, all paradises are like Eden. (pp. 270 f.)

Again and again Donna Anna points out to him that he has obligations, that he is still bound by honor, by compulsion, but he cannot accept her ideas. Still at the end her glowing pictures of how much he could accomplish with the powers and resources of the Commander stir his fancy. When she points out the contrast between his power as a solitary bandit, almost dead from hostile attacks or hunger, and that which he could have as Commander, the thought startles him and he allows her to put upon him the Commander's cloak and hat. Then she sees him in his glory, and he looks into the mirror only to utter the despairing words, "It's he! It is his likeness!" At that moment the figure of the Commander comes out of his portrait and strikes him in the heart. Don Juan dies. He could not add order to his feeling of freedom; he could not stand the appreciation of the logic of life.

Such a clash of ideals held by two equal protagonists is a frequent element in the poetic dramas of Lesya Ukrainka. In a sense neither Dolores, with her complete superhuman capacity for the spiritualizing of her passions to a degree where not even Don Juan himself can affect them, nor the Commander, with his superhuman or infrahuman regard for the established order, offers a guide to mortals in their efforts to maintain even a humble place in human nature. Both Don

⁸ All these are typical of the Don Juan story from the time of the *Burlador*.

Juan and Donna Anna are crushed in their attempts to pit human reasoning against the power of the absolute. Don Juan, reckoning with material power, and Donna Anna, reaching for the ideal of freedom, are both stricken down, and in this respect we can compare them with the son and daughter in *Martianus the Advocate* who rebel in different ways against the overpowering self-control of their secretly Christian father. We find the same sort of confusion in the *Babylonian Captivity* and in *On the Ruins* as well as in the tragedy of both Stepan and Oksana in *The Noble Woman*.¹⁰

Yet there is still another sense to the drama which would be understood in the obscure language of the day by every Ukrainian. The first two scenes which represent Donna Anna at the time when she can dream freely of those romantic hopes which stir in the breasts of every human being are laid in Seville. Throughout, Lesya Ukrainka has tried to picture there a pleasant existence, cultured, humane, and attractive. Opposed to this is Madrid, the setting for the last three scenes where the clan of the De Mendozas are the rigid and remorseless pursuers of a stern and heartless ideal. In the cryptic language of the day, Madrid stands for the regime in Moscow interested only in crushing the milder civilization of the Ukrainians.

If this may seem far-fetched to the average reader, we can only point to *The Noble Woman*, written a year earlier, which describes the sad fate of an idealistic Ukrainian couple thrown among the ruling classes of Moscow. There is shown in the Russian capital the same adherence to the externals of propriety, the same disregard for the feelings of the individual, the same unwillingness to consider human desires when they are in the slightest conflict with the rigid manmade autocratic system which views the slightest normal deviation from the rules as treason and a crime of the first magnitude. The *Stone Master* is then still another of that long series of works by Lesya Ukrainka which under a literary form depict the Ukrainian opposition to the Russian Empire and set forth an ideal of human dignity which is consonant with that of Western Europe and not with that of the Great Russians.

We have spoken little of the poetic value of the play. Lesya Ukrainka has been recognized since her death as one of the greatest poets in the Ukrainian language, ranking next to Taras Shevchenko and practically on a par or above Ivan Franko. She is the ideal poetess of culture and of literature, but she is also in supreme control of her materials and her themes.

The *Stone Master* is one of her last and greatest works. It is fully in the tradition of the great treatments of Don Juan, and it is one of the most striking adaptations of the subject to a modern content and a modern message. The poetess did not need to alter substantially the old story. She was able to employ nearly all the episodes that have

¹⁰ Lesya Ukrainka, *Spirit of Flame* (New York, 1950).

been added to it during its long history. She was familiar with the several versions, especially the French and Spanish, and her retelling of the tale has added her name to the long list of the great masters of European literature who have handled it. The drama rests upon a solid foundation of European tradition and not on the Russian versions which preceded it; none of these has been written with that keen appreciation of human nature and the problems of the modern world that she has shown. Lesya Ukrainka's account of Don Juan and Donna Anna belongs among the most striking examples of its kind and shows how a new generation can fill old legends with new thoughts without resorting to arbitrary and disrupting changes.

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PRAGUE AND THE ORIGINS OF RAINER MARIA RILKE, FRANZ KAFKA, AND FRANZ WERFEL

By HEINZ POLITZER¹

There is hardly a theme in European letters between 1880 and 1920 that has undergone so radical a change as the motif of the city. From Zola's markets in *Le Ventre de Paris* to the aloof and eerie promenades of Proust; from Francis Thompson's Charing Cross to the "unreal city" of T. S. Eliot; from James Joyce's *Dubliners* to *Finnegans Wake*; from Theodor Fontane's to Alfred Döblin's Berlin; or from the Lübeck of Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks* to the Kaisersaschern of *Doctor Faustus*—the motif of the city has been subjected to constant deepening and intensification. Reality, more and more discredited, became transparent in an ever-increasing degree. The milieu began to be seen as a projection of the hero's character or, as in Joyce, as his pseudo-mythical antagonist. The individual and his background merged, as on a tapestry. Precisely because the modern city became the meeting ground of the "lonely crowd," of men who constantly passed by one another without ever being able to establish genuine communication, it grew into the image of human forsakenness par excellence. It was depicted as idol and demon, Babel and Baal, or as the empty shell that surrounded the nothingness of modern existence. In it, modern man found a palpable symbol of the spiritual crisis through which he saw himself moving. Anguish and alienation, solitude and bewilderment, were accepted as basic experiences; they were, in many instances, childhood experiences as well. Thus, as often as not, the motif of the demonic city was built from material gathered at the native places of the writers.

Within the orbit of German literature the city of Prague was predestined to show this transformation first and most radically. Its tragic history was well preserved in crooked streets and shady courtyards; its uncanny atmosphere had impressed observers as early and as independent from one another as the American Longfellow and the Northern German Wilhelm Raabe. Inhabited by Czechs and ruled by Austrians, the Bohemian capital was a hotbed of conflicts that were both national and social by nature. Literature reflected these conflicts by changing a living city into a haunted abode. Already the glassy shallowness of the Prague landscapes in Rilke's *Larenopfer* reflected an atmosphere which the poet himself called "ghostly"² in his later years. While national strife within the Hapsburg empire moved toward a climax, ghosts and monsters like Gustav Meyrink's *Golem* of 1915 began to appear in the streets of Prague; madmen like Max Brod's Jastrau-Klas (*Der Tod ist ein vorübergehender Schwächezu-*

¹ Written with the support of a grant from the American Philosophical Society.

² Rainer Maria Rilke, *Briefe 1907-1914* (Leipzig, 1933), p. 10.

stand) mixed with eccentrics, hunchbacks, prostitutes, and procurers, the *Mädchenhirten* of Egon Erwin Kisch. The very air of the city seemed infested with the miasma of sexual promiscuity as in Max Brod's novels of manners, in Leo Perutz's historical sketches, and, much later, in Paul Leppin's *Golem* drama. For this process of demonization did not come to an end with the proclamation of the first Czech republic; instead, many a German writer now replaced the historical center of the city, the Hradčany castle, with the petty bourgeois quarters and proletarian slums which had eaten their way deep into the heart of the city. Thus Franz Werfel in his *Embezzled Heaven* of 1939 describes in almost identical words the scenery which Franz Kafka had chosen for his *Trial* twenty years before:

A tortuous congeries of dilapidated buildings seems to be waiting for the house-wrecker. The city has spread far out into what was once the countryside, having forgotten this quarter and left it to moulder away with its crooked roofs, worm-eaten loggias, squalid little courts, and worn wooden steps. . . . In the undrained swamps of the past . . . there dwell only the lowest ranks of the community, a few feeble-minded eccentrics, the wrecks of society, and people who, having come down in the world, are unable to afford better shelter.³

In Kafka's books the city appears only for short glimpses. The cathedral emerges but once, in a climactic scene of *The Trial*; the river is mentioned, when one of the heroes plunges into its depths.⁴ But the air of utter frustration that permeates Kafka's writings was characteristic of most German authors who wrote in our century in or about Prague. A common note of self-irony, at times unmasked as sheer self-hatred, was prevalent. Inbred morbidity, a symptom of the atrophy of creative energies that had befallen Old Austria, lingered on in the German enclave in Prague even after the collapse of the empire. Franz Werfel's short story *The House of Mourning* (*Das Trauerhaus*, 1927) constructs a witty counterpoint to this Austrian fatigue by showing a bordello, whose degenerate proprietor dies amid the orgiastic activities of his *Freudenhaus*. "Please understand me," he says at one point. "One can sleep slowly, one can sleep in the ordinary way, one can sleep fast, and one can sleep very fast. You know, my friend, there is no end to what one can sleep through in a quarter of an hour. . . ."⁵ The commonness of this Old Austrian fatigue is borne out by the frequency with which the word "sleep" appears in the diaries of the restless Franz Kafka. If the German writers of Prague seemed to be stricken more violently and for a much longer time by a-vitality (a malaise that had been a literary fashion around the turn of the century), it was because their unique position

³ Translated by Moray Firth (New York, 1940), pp. 213-14.

⁴ The Hradčany castle that dominates the Prague landscape might well have served as Kafka's *Urschloß*, although in *The Castle* the seat of authority is surrounded by a village. Kafka lived in the Alchemists' Street on the Prague castle hill during the years preceding the composition of the novel.

⁵ In *Twilight of a World*, trans. H. T. Lowe-Porter (New York, 1937), p. 526.

in an alien environment tended to aggravate and to perennialize their disturbances. Furthermore, as Peter Demetz has pointed out in his recent study of Rilke's Prague years, these intellectuals were "devoid of any contact with a sizable number of readers [and] were condemned to ponder their own strange fate in the narrow streets of the old city."⁶ The lack of intimacy with nature that has often been noticed with regard to Kafka⁷ is also cited by Demetz as an explanation of the introvert character of these German writers and their literature. Even in his last years Rilke spoke of the "oppressive conditions in Prague"; he recalled the atmosphere as "dull, musty, sultry, and badly aired."⁸ German Prague seems to have been a community that nauseated and horrified a substantial part of its members, a city that had condemned itself to death in the most sensitive of its sons.

And yet this doomed city was still strong enough to leave deep marks on the works of Rainer Maria Rilke (b. 1875), Franz Kafka (1883), and Franz Werfel (1890). Superficially, the careers of the three writers seem to have little in common: Rilke was sent to the military academy of St. Pölten at the age of ten; he returned to Prague in 1891, took up studies at the German university in 1895, and turned his back on the city for good in 1898. (His visit there in 1907 amounted to a revisitation, very much on the lines of Tonio Kröger's last visit to Lübeck.) Kafka left Prague but once for a long stretch of time, when he went to Berlin in 1923, to return a dying man. Werfel made it a habit to see his parents every year until the Nazis occupied Austria, and died an exile in America, correcting a volume of poems that contained a newly written sequence of nostalgic ballads about his youth.

Like their careers, the artistic aims of Rilke, Kafka, and Werfel were different; and so is the relevance of their achievements: Rilke looked for salvation in a Romantic and Russian Christ, and found an answer to his questions in the Angel, the supra-Romantic and totally un-Christian messenger of the *Duino Elegies*. Kafka was a "religious humorist"⁹ who in grandiose monotony composed parables intended to convey only the message "that the incomprehensible is incomprehensible";¹⁰ but groping through the darkness of his work, he kept the direction of religious truth. Werfel, born a musician rather than a writer, squandered his gifts brilliantly while trying to defend a Christian position outside of the Catholic creed, to which he adhered in a highly qualified manner. However, these heterogeneous writers were united by their paradoxical religiosity, by the emphasis they put on their early disturbances, and by the ardor with which they tried to

⁶ René Rilkes *Prager Jahre* (Düsseldorf, 1953), p. 107.

⁷ E.g., John Urzidil, "The Oak and the Rock," in *The Kafka Problem* (New York, 1946), pp. 276-86.

⁸ Quoted from Bernhard Blume, "Die Stadt als seelische Landschaft im Werk Rainer Maria Rilkes," *Monatshefte*, XLIII (1951), 67.

⁹ Thomas Mann, "Homage," preface to *The Castle*, 2nd edition (New York, 1941), p. xiv.

¹⁰ "On Parables," in *Great Wall of China* (New York, 1946), p. 258.

re-open communications with the community of ordinary people from whom they, as modern writers, felt desperately estranged. All three, at certain periods, cultivated friendships with Czech literati, but since these friendships were essentially literary by nature, they failed to liberate their minds from an ingrained claustrophobia. Thus the quest for communication has in their works a very personal and urgent ring; it started, as all three have testified, in the days of their youth. For around the German homes of Rilke, Kafka, and Werfel arose the reality of Czech life like a threatening wall. In his essay *Franz Kafka and Prague*, Pavel Eisner has sketched the social and linguistic seclusion in which the Germans of Prague were forced to grow up: it was a "Ghetto in matters of language and culture"¹¹ and, for the Jews Kafka and Werfel, a religious Ghetto as well. Thrown back on themselves by the absence of contacts with any hinterland, these families suffered from the internal discord which is bred by unnatural intimacy. The Czechs outside are described by Eisner, somewhat summarily, as

Sociologically . . . ideally healthy, having preserved a rich biological communication between capital, province and peasantry, from which the springs of rejuvenescence flowed toward Prague. They were a vigorous folk even among the factory workers, with few patricians, thoroughly democratic, with only very few barriers between the social classes, without a sense of social caste.¹²

Against this background the childhood drama of Rilke, Kafka, and Werfel was enacted. Of course, each one can be understood only on the basis of his own personal and social situation.

Rainer Maria Rilke was the son of an Austrian officer who for lack of means had been forced to leave the army and accept a post as a railway official. The history of Joseph Rilke illustrated the position of the Austrian bureaucracy: they had been banned to Prague as to a colony, and they felt and behaved accordingly. Even if they were not ennobled, they felt as *Beamtenaristokratie*; and Rilke's mother Phia, who was largely responsible for the atmosphere of "sham and irritation"¹³ in the Rilke household, never gave up the dreams that would associate her with the Austrian aristocracy. Franz Kafka's grandfather had been a butcher; his father had come from Southern Bohemia, and had made good in the capital. But he brought with him the small-town atmosphere that had molded him in his youth; this accounts for the petty bourgeois setting from which Franz Kafka tried to break away throughout his life as a writer. Franz Werfel's parents belonged to a well-to-do family who gave themselves the air of patricians, were liberals, optimists, and cosmopolitans, looked to Vienna as the natural center of civilization, and were, quite in general, *Goethejuden* who knew how to reconcile business and belles lettres.

As boys, all three remained secluded from their Czech surroundings or, rather, they were exposed to them in a most dubious way by the

¹¹ New York: Golden Griffin, 1950, p. 21.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 21 f.

¹³ "Atmosphäre aus Talmi und Unmut," Demetz, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

fact that the German families in Prague employed predominantly Czech servants. That meant that Czech folk songs and fairy tales, Czech music and other signs of simple community life penetrated the nurseries, but were devaluated by the inferior status of their bearers. All three were raised in the German language; if Czech was used at all, it was the primitive and half-consciously distorted *Kuchelböh-misch*, which the German employers used in their dealings with people from the lower walks of life. All three suffered in their youth from the precariousness of their existence, but learned at the same time that a healthy and unbroken life was possible outside of their isolated homes, that there were groups that lived in a wholesome conformity, suppressed, to be sure, but vitally resisting all hardships. Thus, on their different social levels, Rilke, Kafka, and Werfel experienced the "good" and natural life of their Czech neighbors not as an encouragement, but as a reproach that was directed against them.

Rilke, the student, described his native city with the condescension of an arrogantly detached connoisseur. He conducted aesthetic tours through a scenic landscape. To be sure, he pointed to the landmarks of Czech history as well as to selected scenes of Czech everyday life, but his every gesture was timid, lame, and strangely undecided. The most personal and, to my mind, most successful poem from the *Larenopfer* begins with the words:

Mich rührt so sehr
böhmischen Volkes Weise,
schleicht sie ins Herz sich leise,
macht sie es schwer.¹⁴

The verb in the first line is revealing, this "being moved" of the poet by a Czech folk song. With this word he approaches the Czech people as a civilized man faces a primitive one, or as an adult bends down to a child, surprised by the wonderful performance of somebody whom he has deemed to be far less developed than he is himself, and at the same time touched by the recollection of a state of innocence which he, the refined grown-up, has long since lost. And, to be sure, the second stanza shows the Czech people in the image of a child who sings while weeding a potato field.¹⁵

But the *Larenopfer* also contains the description of a proletarian slum that inadvertently betrays the uneasiness underlying Rilke's debonair manner. Inwardly, he felt oppressed by something porten-

¹⁴ "Volkweise," *Gedichte*, Erster Teil (Leipzig, 1927), p. 61.

¹⁵ Recent Rilke monographs, especially *Rainer Maria Rilke, His Life and Work*, by F. W. van Herrikuizen (New York, 1952), and Peter Demetz's Rilke study, have produced additional material concerning the interest Rilke took in the intellectual life of the Czechs during his years in Prague. But however sincere this interest might have been, "Rilke's critical attitude towards Czech literature was based on the assumption that the Czech nation could express its naive existence only in plain, homely folksongs unless it was to betray its own destiny." Peter Demetz, "The Czech Themes of Rainer Maria Rilke," *German Life and Letters*, new series, VI (1952), 46.

tous, without being able to grasp or name it. He faced the workmen of Smichov with a strange mixture of awe and aloofness:

Hin gehn durch heißes Abendrot
aus den Fabriken Männer, Dirnen,—
auf ihre niedern, dumpfen Stirnen
schrieb sich mit Schweiß und Ruß die Not.

Die Mienen sind verstumpft: es brach
das Auge. Schwer durchschlürfte die Sohle
den Weg, und Staub zieht und Gejohle
wie das Verhängnis ihnen nach.¹⁶

The "fatality" (*Verhängnis*) that struck Rilke here stands in crass contrast to the playfulness in which he indulged while strolling through the genteel landscape of Prague. The very tone of the poem has changed. The enjambement has ceased to be part of the impressionistic technique used elsewhere in the *Larenopfer*. Here it has become the expression of the poet's breathlessness. Quite literally, his breath was taken by what he saw in Smichov. The verses no longer run on into one another, nor does the enjambement serve to knit the individual lines more closely together: it chops the sentences off so that they hang like severed limbs from one line into the next. With probably unconscious artistry Rilke produced here the effects of crudeness, mutilation, and violence. This structural achievement reflects a feeling of double estrangement. For it was not only Czechs but proletarians who seemed to hurl against the German idler a threat that culminated in the foreboding of a "fatality." This one word *Verhängnis* lifts the poem above a realism that otherwise would have been unbearably trite.

More than a decade later the young Franz Werfel captured the same feeling of twofold alienation in "Das Malheur" (*Der Weltfreund*, 1908-1910):

Als das Mädchen die Schüssel fallen ließ, blieben alle Gäste anfangs stumm,
Nur die Hausfrau sagte etwas und drehte sich nicht um.
Das Mädchen aber stand regungslos, wie in unnatürlichen Schlaf gesenkt,
Krampfhaft die Arme zu einer rettenden Geste verrenkt.
Dem verlegenen Mitleid der Gäste hatte sich scheues Erstaunen zugesellt,
Denn sie sahen plötzlich Eine mitten in ein Schicksal gestellt.
Kamen schon die Stubenmädchen mit Tüchern und Besen, der Diener und selbst
der Herr vom Haus.
Sie aber ging ganz wunderschön von Kindheit und Heimweh hinaus. . . .¹⁷

There is no need to prove that this servant girl, too, is a Czech, a vague anticipation of Werfel's Barbara in the *Pure of Heart* and of Teta Linek, the kitchen maid, in *Embezzled Heaven*. What Werfel calls "fate" (*Schicksal*) is closely akin to the fatality that struck Rilke in the slum of Smichov: the national and social difference that separated his life from that of the Czech people. It is no accident that the girl is made radiant by the memories of her poor origins as if they

¹⁶ "Hinter Smichov," *Gedichte*, Erster Teil, p. 72.

¹⁷ *Gedichte* (Berlin, 1927), pp. 64 f.

were the image of childhood, innocence, and paradise, and that the rich, privileged and saturated as they are, feel embarrassed by a fate that is completely incomprehensible to them. (Of course, the hostess and the master of the house stand for Werfel's own parents.) The son and poet, on the other hand, is allowed to share in the servant's destiny. For when, at the end of the poem, the girl is showered with "the most generous tips, as if out of reverence," he has the guests of his father pay for a guilt which he himself feels. Formally, Werfel replaced the loose impressionism of Rilke and his generation by an overdrawn version of Walt Whitman's long lines, an innovation in German poetry that contributed decidedly to the success of *Der Weltfreund*. Throughout his early poetry Werfel borrowed Whitman's impetuosity to express youth, vitality, and innocence. "Das Malheur" is spoken in the primitive cadence of a child; it strives for the very qualities of the folk song by which Rilke had only vaguely been moved. With the help of this primitiveness Werfel stepped down to the level of the servant girl with whom he sided against the rich and old ones, that is, against his own origins.

The revolt of these poets against their origins came to a climax in Franz Kafka. His life was overshadowed by the conflict with his father; resisting paternal authority, he accepted as a comrade anyone who seemed to fall under the sway of his father's tyranny. Socially of lower birth than either Rilke or Werfel, he had, as a child, come into contact not only with Czech servant girls but with the Czech employees in his father's store. "You called these employees 'paid enemies,'" he remembered in the letter to his father that was his *grand testament*, "and they were indeed paid enemies, but even before they had become so, you seemed to be their 'paying enemy.'" ¹⁸ In 1911 the whole staff gave notice, and Franz was sent out to the Czech suburbs of Zizkov and Radotín to plead with the main clerks and apologize for their treatment. ¹⁹ He did not have to condescend to the Czechs; nor did he need any juvenile contrition to sympathize with them, for he sensed in them a rebellion as well-camouflaged and as deep-seated as was his own.

During the latter decades of the nineteenth century the Czech had played almost exclusively the part of the funny man in German literature; he was described as stubborn and illiterate, impudent and meddlesome, a born domestic even if he posed as a parvenu. But Jaroslav Hašek, Kafka's contemporary, revaluated these properties in his *Good Soldier Schweik*. Meddlesomeness suddenly led to insurrection; stubbornness resulted in sabotage. (The passive resistance of the "Good Soldiers Schweik" was one of the reasons for the downfall of the Hapsburg monarchy.) Hašek belonged to the anarchist *Klub Mladých* (Youth Club), and Kafka attended the meetings of this club

¹⁸ *Hochzeitsvorbereitungen auf dem Lande und andere Prosa aus dem Nachlaß* (New York, 1953), pp. 186 f.

¹⁹ *Diaries of Franz Kafka, 1910-1913* (New York, 1948), pp. 97-99.

as a silent listener.²⁰ It is easy to see the cause of these strange visits: the hatred of the Czechs was directed against militarism, capitalism, and, particularly, the Austrian bureaucracy. This Austrian bureaucracy, on the other hand, occupies so much space in Kafka's *Trial* and *Castle* that both novels could be misread as political satires. Moreover, the people who live in the shadow of the *Castle* and on the periphery of the *Trial*, are largely patterned after the only coherent national community of which Kafka possessed a first-hand knowledge—the Czechs. This is especially true of the women in his books. Their names, Leni, Olga, Pepi, etc., could belong to both Czechs and Germans; but their characters are, as Eisner has noted, "clearly reminiscences of [Kafka's] Prague Czech environment."²¹ The girls are used by Kafka's heroes on their way to the *Castle* and the *Trial*, and are ruthlessly thrown away as soon as they have served their purpose.

In general the attitude of Kafka's lonely hero toward the people is one of impatience, arrogance, and grudge; he wanders through their midst like a fallen angel or a persecuted outcast; his rhythm of life is not theirs; and he resents their living together because it reminds him of his own isolation. For Kafka was an ally of the Czechs only in the negative, that is, in their fight against authority. As an individual and artist, he remained the son of the German bourgeois class. This does not mean, however, that the guilt complex that lies at the core of his narratives could be interpreted, in a historical sense, as the bad conscience a German felt toward the Czechs. The German-Czech antagonism, aggravated as it was in Kafka's case by the conflicts between Germans and Jews, and between Czechs and Jews, was only a materialization of an innate and far-reaching disharmony. That Kafka's guilt feeling was truly supra-national in range is made clear by the first chapter of the *Trial*. There the bank manager Joseph K. is arrested in the presence of three of his subordinates. Their appearance in this scene is inexplicable unless one pays attention to their names. They are "the stiff Rabensteiner swinging his arms, the fair Kullich with the deep-set eyes, and Kaminer with his insupportable smile, caused by a chronic muscular twitch."²² Together, the German Rabensteiner, the Czech Kullich, and the Jew Kaminer represent the population of Prague. Joseph K. is arrested *urbi et orbi*; his guilt is assumed to be universal. In him, man shoulders the collective guilt of modern existence.²³

²⁰ Max Brod, *Stefan Rott oder das Jahr der Entscheidung* (Berlin, 1931), pp. 32 f. See also Max Brod, *Frans Kafka, A Biography* (New York, 1947), p. 86.

²¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 86.

²² Translated by Willa and Edwin Muir (New York, 1948), p. 21.

²³ Maurice Gravier ("Strindberg et Kafka," *Etudes Germaniques*, VIII [1953], 134) calls the three employees "personnages secondaires [qui] sont à ce point stylisés qu'ils perdent toute individualité distincte," and "Gruppenpersonen." They are indeed allegories of the collective, and individualized only insofar as they represent certain aspects of the community, i.e., the three ethnical

Prague not only impressed the critical condition of modern man in an especially drastic form on Rilke, Kafka, and Werfel; it served them as a gateway to the Slavic world of which it had always been an outpost. Gogol's metaphysical satire contributed essentially to the climate and structure of Kafka's narratives: the shock technique Kafka used at the beginning of *Metamorphosis* was anticipated by Gogol in *The Nose*; the Russian's "upside down world," the nightmarish character of his figures, many of whom are, in the words of V. Nabokov, like "people in one of those dreams when you think you have waked up while all you have done is to enter the most dreadful [most dreadful in its sham reality] region of dreams," his poetry which consisted in "the mysteries of the irrational as perceived through rational words,"²⁴ determined the style of much that the German writer has produced.

Rilke's journeys to Russia in 1899 and 1900 helped him to strip off the facile and frigid style of his beginnings. In Russia he found his own melody in the unending litanies of the *Stundenbuch*; there he felt as a "peasant among peasants," and Lou Andreas-Salomé recalls the radiant expression on his face when one of the women kissed him with the words: "Surely, you too are only [one of the] people."²⁵ Rilke's English biographer, E. M. Butler, indulges in an easy smile while recording this scene;²⁶ she overlooks the fact that this first contact with a living community changed the Prague student into the poet Rilke. Because his own lyrical language was given him there, Rilke declared Moscow to be "the city of [his] oldest and deepest memories," and Russia to be his "home."²⁷

Being younger and richer than Rilke and Kafka, Werfel committed himself more deeply to the ideas of the revolution than they had ever dreamed of doing. But his political attitude (that led to his tragicomical participation in the Vienna revolution of 1918) was largely inspired by Dostoevski's religiosity. From the poem "Vater und Sohn" (*Wir sind* [1911], p. 12) to the novel *Nicht der Mörder, der Ermordete ist schuldig* (1920), he formulated the revolt against his origins in the terms of Dostoevski's *Brothers Karamazov*. In 1915 he described a meeting (probably imaginary) with the Serbian assassin of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand. He transformed the murderer into a Russian Christ, and crowned his report with a Dostoevskian aphorism: "All suffering is objective; all pain is with God."²⁸ In his *Christliche Sendung* to Kurt Hiller (1917), p. 18, he established Dostoevski as the patron of German expressionism. The theodicy of

groups of Prague. Their function is closely related to that of the chorus in Greek tragedy.

²⁴ Vladimir Nabokov, *Nikolai Gogol* (Norfolk, Conn., 1944), pp. 36, 42, 55.

²⁵ Rainer Maria Rilke (Leipzig, 1929), p. 25.

²⁶ Rainer Maria Rilke (New York, 1941), p. 52.

²⁷ Ellen Key, *Seelen und Werke* (Berlin, 1911), p. 159.

²⁸ "Cabrino-witsch: Ein Tagebuch aus dem Jahre 1915," in *Erzählungen aus zwei Welten* (Stockholm, 1948), I, 25.

the Russian writer was to determine his thinking almost to the end.²⁹ However, a decisive change occurred in Werfel around 1925. In the *Pure of Heart* (1929) the peasant woman Barbara is still distinguished by poverty as if it were the *große Glanz von innen* of the monk in Rilke's *Stundenbuch*, but the revolutionary Christianity of the young poet has been supplanted by a mystical quietism, with a pronounced inclination to tearfulness. Clear-sightedly, Ernst Jockers diagnosed in 1927: "[Werfel] had gone too far East, thus eventually he went too far West."³⁰ The self-styled attorney of Franz Ferdinand's assassin gradually changed into an advocate of Emperor Franz Joseph and his regime.³¹ The poet of the Slavic-Christian revolution settled down as a eulogist of the Austrian restoration, a pseudo-Catholic poet. The phenomenal unevenness of his later works can be explained by his endeavors to believe, and make his readers believe, in a static religious system which he could only profess by betraying the enthusiasm of his youth. But he was unable to betray himself; hence the contrition that prompted him to write genuine poetry up to the very end; hence his frequent returns to the world of his childhood where he recovered the purity and the élan of his early verse. In the volume *Schlaf und Erwachen* (1936) he revisited his school, *das Haus der Piaristen*:³²

Wenn ich mir die Kindheit hole
Wunderlich und unversehrt,
Glaub ich nicht, sie sei wie Kohle
Längst verglommen, längst verzehrt.
Wo die Kindgespenster nisten,
Geh ich als mein Widerhall
Ewig zu den Piaristen
Irgendwo in Gottes All.³³

Once more he conjured up the Prague atmosphere, complete with the dry coolness of the vaulted school building, the father who stands *bei den anderen Herrn Eltern*, the map of the Hapsburg empire on the wall, and the subversiveness that glitters in the eyes of some of his classmates, foreboding war. The very rhythm of the poem follows the meter of the old Austrian anthem, the *Kaiserlied*. But by the bold pun made on the word *Piaristen*, he elevated the school to an image of the universe, and the timidity of the child to the sinner's longing for expiation by his teachers who have changed into *pü* and blessed spirits.

Even Rilke, who had hoped to forget the "story, wanting in light, of his missed childhood,"³⁴ carried the anguish and narrowness of his

²⁹ Cf. Marysia Turrian, *Dostojewskij und Franz Werfel* (Bern, 1950).

³⁰ "Franz Werfel als religiöser Dichter," *Germanic Review*, II (1927), 62.

³¹ "An Essay upon the Meaning of Imperial Austria," in *Twilight of a World*, pp. 3-40.

³² It is more than a coincidence that Rilke, too, had attended classes in this *Haus der Piaristen* (Demetz, *op. cit.*, p. 139).

³³ "Erster Schultag," *Gedichte, Aus den Jahren 1908-1945* (Frankfurt [?], 1953), pp. 103 f.

³⁴ Letter to Valerie David-Rhönfeld, Dec. 4, 1894, quoted from B. Blume, "Die Stadt . . .," *loc. cit.*, p. 67.

Prague days along with him. He never met Kafka, and hardly knew of him; but often his prose style resembles Kafka's, as in the *Journal of My Other Self* (1910):

One saw, at the different stories, the walls of the rooms to which the paper still clung, and here and there marks of the beams of flooring and ceiling. Near the bedroom partition there still remained, along the whole length of the wall, a greyish-white streak; across this there crept in worm-like spirals that seemed to serve some unspeakably disgusting digestive function, the gaping, rust covered channel of the water-closet pipe. At the ceiling edges remained grey, dusty traces of the paths the gas-pipes had followed; they bent hither and thither, taking unexpected turns, and ran along the painted walls into a black hole that had been carelessly torn out. . . .⁸⁶

It is the demonic realism of Kafka that Rilke used in his description of demolished houses in Paris. The scaffolds, torture chambers, mad-houses, vaults of bridges in late autumn, which Rilke's *Journal* contains in one single sentence,⁸⁶ are reminiscent of the "props" with which Kafka furnished his Prague scenes. Their origins seem to have made brothers-in-pain out of these poets, so that they wrought related material into images which were meant to express a similar existential situation. In the *Journal* Rilke had suppressed this material, and banned it to the unconscious; in his last period, however, he returned quite explicitly to the memories of his youth. Vestiges of childhood are imprinted there like ciphers. The fourth *Duino Elegy*, probably written in 1915, harks back:

. . . O Stunden der Kindheit,
da hinter den Figuren mehr als nur
Vergangnes war und vor uns nicht die Zukunft.⁸⁷

And later still, in the almost inhuman loneliness of the *Sonnets to Orpheus* he recalls the "playmates of the past childhood," the "scattered gardens of the city," and "the anguish of the long year."

Wagen umrollten uns fremd, vorübergezogen,
Häuser umstanden uns stark, aber unwahr,—und keines
kannte uns je. Was war wirklich im All?

Once more, carriages and houses are used as images of the unreality of reality, as well as of estrangement. But before the trancelike state of Rilke's final solitude the very quality of being real seems to have become the hallmark of untruth (*stark, aber unwahr*). The ambiguity of the question *Was war wirklich im All?* (which can be read to mean "What was real?" and "What was really in the universe?") was reached by a poet who accepted nothing more from reality than the "glorious curves" of falling balls, that is, mere play and abstract beauty. This question shows that Rilke needed the complete renunciation of life to efface the scars of his past:

⁸⁶ (*Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge*), trans. John Linton (New York, 1930), pp. 43 f.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁸⁷ *Gedichte*, Dritter Teil (Leipzig, 1927), p. 276.

Was war wirklich im All?
Nichts. Nur die Bälle. Ihre herrlichen Bogen.
Auch nicht die Kinder . . . Aber manchmal trat eines,
ach ein vergehendes, unter den fallenden Ball.³⁸

Here, the "passing child" is reunited and reconciled with the poet who seems to pass away in profound self-concentration.

Kafka, too, had striven to break through his solitude. Next to the Czechs, it was the Jews from Eastern Europe who attracted him by their relatively coherent group life. When a Yiddish theater troupe came to Prague in 1911, he followed their performances with the same half-amused attention which he had displayed during the meetings of the Czech anarchists. He tried to join both groups; the Czech Gentiles in his extremely passionate and unhappy love for Milena Jesenská,³⁹ and the Eastern Jews in his union with Dora Dymant who gave him a year of euphoric happiness when he was already marked by death. In 1911 he had drawn a parallel between Czechs and Eastern Jews in his diary, a very personal commentary on the role of the writer in a small nation:

What I understand of contemporary Jewish literature in Warsaw . . . and of contemporary Czech literature . . . points to the fact that many of the benefits of literature—the stirring of minds, the coherence of national consciousness, often unrealized in public life and always tending to disintegrate, the pride which a nation gains from a literature of its own and the support it is afforded in the face of the hostile surrounding world, this keeping of a diary by a nation . . . all these effects can be produced even by a literature whose development is not in actual fact unusually broad in scope, but seems to be, because it lacks outstanding talents.⁴⁰

At that time Kafka seems to have looked to both Czechs and Jews as to national communities that were able to accept him and to benefit from his contribution to their literatures. But when, in 1912, his creative genius materialized for the first time in the novellas, *The Judgment*, *Metamorphosis*, and *The Stoker* (which was to become the first chapter of *America*), these writings neither expressed "pride" nor were they "supported" by anybody. Georg Bendemann was condemned by his own father to commit suicide; Gregor Samsa found himself changed into an insect; and the stoker was exposed by his outlandishness to the persecutions of a world that was set on victimizing him a priori. All three stories are but variations of that "single great myth of frustration" which, according to Hans Egon Holthusen,⁴¹ runs through his entire work. Never did he transcend this motive of frustration. But it may be said that his contribution to modern literature lies in his stubborn adherence to this one theme which was his destiny. For this stubbornness enabled him to deepen

³⁸ II, 8. *Ibid.*, p. 348.

³⁹ Cf. *Briefe an Milena* (New York, 1952).

⁴⁰ Translated by Joseph Kresh, *Diaries*, pp. 191 f.

⁴¹ *Der unbehauste Mensch: Motive und Probleme der modernen Literatur* (München, 1952), p. 12.

his personal conflict until he penetrated to a region that came very near to the realm of belief. He did not reach this realm, but he was brave and strong enough to profess this failure. His novels break off where authority, the master of the *Castle*, the supreme judge of the *Trial*, should have entered the proceedings. Authority has become utterly inaccessible; and this inaccessibility is in turn the reason for the unreality which the world assumed in the eyes of his heroes, and in Kafka's own eyes. From his desk at the Workers Accident Insurance Institute in Prague, where he worked for the greater part of his life, he wrote to Max Brod:

In my . . . headquarters . . . people fall, as if they were drunk, off scaffolds and into machines, all the planks tip up, there are landslides everywhere, all the ladders slip, everything one puts up falls down, and what one puts down one falls over oneself. All these young girls in china factories who incessantly hurl themselves downstairs with mountains of crockery give one a headache. . . .⁴²

Here we see once more the young Czech proletarian girl whom Werfel had pitied and glorified in "Das Malheur," but her destiny has now been raised beyond all social and national considerations and placed on the level of human existence proper. The machines, which Rilke condemned as destructive forces in his *Sonnets to Orpheus* (*Alles Erworbne bedroht die Maschine*),⁴³ are derided as centers of senselessness and generators of unreality; the very life of modern man, governed as it is by technical progress, is ridiculed in a tragic manner. By showing that a world without sense is a world without authority—that is, without God—Kafka produced the image of a twentieth-century Everyman who is called by the voices of doom.

Thus "he achieved the task of constructing a framework with an empty space for God even if he thought there was no God in the world as he lived in it." This sentence points not only to Kafka's situation as a man and a writer. It is equally valid for Rilke, who, at least up to the *Duino Elegies*, did not see God for the images he had made of him. It is eminently true of Werfel as well, who, while preaching God, was only able to give a convincing form to the eclipse of God (*Gottesfinsternis*) which he saw spreading over our time. And yet this sentence was not coined with any of our writers in mind. It stands in a preface Stephen Spender wrote to the prose of Wolfgang Borchert⁴⁴ who was born far from Prague, in Hamburg, three years before Kafka's death and five before Rilke's. Borchert belonged to the second generation of European writers in the crisis; a witness and victim of Germany's catastrophe during the Second World War, he expressed only what he had himself physically undergone. But his sufferings had been anticipated in many a detail and certainly in all their depth by Rilke, Kafka, and Werfel. Was it their origins in the unruly center

⁴² Translated by G. Humphreys Roberts. Max Brod, *Franz Kafka*, p. 87.

⁴³ II, 10. *Gedichte*, pp. 350 f.

⁴⁴ *The Man Outside*, in *Prose Works of Wolfgang Borchert* (Norfolk, Conn., 1952), p. ix.

of Europe that had made forerunners of contemporary European literature out of these three poets? Undoubtedly their childhood experiences of despair and isolation had alerted their nerves and aroused their consciences to such an extent that the city they came from could grow into an image of utter isolation, and the story of their lives into the legend of the Prodigal Son who, like Rilke's Malte Laurids Brigge, felt that "One alone was capable of loving him. But He was not yet willing."⁴⁵

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⁴⁵ *Journal*, p. 243.

ENGLISH VERSIONS OF *DIE SPANIER IN PERU*

By MYRON MATLAW

Sheridan's only tragedy, *Pizarro* (1799), is usually ignored by scholars and critics. This oversight is unfortunate: the play took English and American theatrical centers by such a storm at the turn of the eighteenth century as had been previously unknown in theatrical annals, furnished a major acting vehicle for the greatest stars from Kemble, Cooper, and Mrs. Siddons to the Keans, Forrest, and Charlotte Cushman, and drew large English and American audiences for almost a century. Sheridan's play, which is an adaptation of Kotzebue's *Die Spanier in Peru, oder: Rolla's Tod* (1795)¹ was, however, but one of many English reworkings of the German play. These English plays, of which there appear to be thirteen,² are for the most part not easily accessible today.³ Aside from bibliographical interest, a brief description of them may shed additional light on Sheridan's work, Kotzebue's popularity in England and America, and the drama in these countries during the age of Sheridan.

English versions of the play consist of three general types: theatrical adaptations, blank-verse renditions, and literal translations. The most important of these is, of course, Sheridan's adaptation, which was published and performed far more frequently in both England and America than all the other versions.

William Dunlap, as Sheridan had done the previous year in London's Drury Lane, utilized *Pizarro* to lure audiences back into the New York Park in 1800, and was equally successful; the play "merited the thanks of the 'manager in distress,'" he later recalled.⁴ Employing Sheridan's adaptation as well as Kotzebue's play, he wrung out of them all of Kotzebue's sentimentality and Sheridan's spectacle.

¹ For a study of Sheridan's and Kotzebue's plays see Leopold Bahlsen, "Kotzebue's Peru-Dramen und Sheridans Pizarro," *Herrigs Archiv*, LXXXI (1888), 353-80. Another comparison of the two plays was made by Marcella Gosch, "Translators' of Kotzebue in England," *MJdU*, XXXI (1939), 175-83.

² Allardyce Nicoll, *History of Late Eighteenth Century Drama* (Cambridge, 1927), p. 65, refers to "an anonymous rendering [of *Die Spanier in Peru*] printed in 1799" and also (p. 264) lists *Pizarro* as a translation by Constantin Geisweiler. I have been unable to find any other record of the anonymous work. Geisweiler's work, as Nicoll himself notes (p. 65), was a translation of Sheridan's play into the German. The confusion in the case of Geisweiler arises because Maria Geisweiler, his sister, is occasionally credited (erroneously, I think) with furnishing Sheridan with the literal translation for his *Pizarro*. James Boaden (*Life of Mrs. Jordan* [London, 1831], II, 43) appears to have been the originator of this hypothesis.

³ The reliable bibliographies, B. Q. Morgan, *Critical Bibliography of German Literature in English Translation* (Stanford, 1938), and Nicoll, *op. cit.*, et al., were compiled without their authors having had access to a number of the English plays, and are therefore incomplete. This holds true too for the *CBEL* which contains errors in its entries on *Pizarro*. Walter Sellier's study, *Kotzebue in England* (Leipzig, 1901), is derivative and often very inaccurate.

⁴ William Dunlap, *History of the American Theatre* (New York, 1832), p. 275.

He retained Sheridan's oratory, which by 1800 had become famous on both sides of the Atlantic, but eliminated Sheridan's finale and those speeches which Sheridan had composed in imitation of Elizabethan, and particularly of Shakespearean, tragedy. The play was published,⁶ but Dunlap himself was the only manager who used it in his theater.

John Henry Anderson's adaptation, performed at the Royal Surrey Theatre on August 30, 1856, but not separately published, appears⁸ to have resembled the one used by Charles Kean, and was advertised in the *Times* on the day of performance as "Sheridan's tragic drama of PIZARRO." Kean's adaptation,⁷ first performed two days later at the Princess's Theatre, was chosen by the manager "for the purpose of exemplifying the customs, ceremonies, and religion of Peru, at the time of the Spanish invasion."⁸ It was a scenically magnificent and spectacular abridgment of Sheridan's *Pizarro*, with settings and melodrama greatly elaborated for effect and historical illustration. It had an extended popular run from September 1, 1856, until the middle of October, and thereafter nightly, until November 18, in an abridged three-act version. The dialogue is Sheridan's, but the oaths and references to Elvira's relationship with Pizarro were toned down for Victorian audiences.

A complete reworking of the familiar plot was made by "A North-Briton" in 1800.⁹ The anonymous author objected to Sheridan's "conspicuous immorality" and "ill placed loyalty," and, hoping to produce a work of art that would live and "edify" the public long after Kotzebue and Sheridan would be forgotten,¹⁰ wrote a new play, using the characters and some of the incidents of his sources. The play was justly condemned by the few people who read it.¹¹ Its language abounds with grammatical errors, and its plot is ludicrously weighty with the most contradicting incidents, characters, and morality.¹²

⁶ William Dunlap, *Pizarro in Peru; or, The Death of Rolla* (New York: Printed by G. F. Hopkins, for William Dunlap, 1800), "With notes marking the variations from the original."

⁷ From Anderson's comments in *Pizarro*, "Lacy's Acting Edition of Plays," Vol. XXVII. Sellier, *op. cit.*, p. 42, calls Anderson's a "neu bearbeitete" version of the play.

⁸ Charles Kean, *Sheridan's Tragic Play of Pizarro; or, The Spaniards in Peru* (London, 1856), "Arranged for representation at the Princess's Theatre, with Historical Notes, by Charles Kean. As first performed on Monday, September 1, 1856."

⁹ *Ibid.*, Kean's preface, p. v.

¹⁰ *Pizarro*; a tragedy in five acts: differing widely from all other *Pizarro's* in respect of characters, sentiments, language, incidents, and catastrophe, by A North-Briton (London, 1800).

¹¹ Author's preface.

¹² *Monthly Review*, second series, XXXI (1800), 211, and *Biographia Dramatica*, edited by Stephen Jones (London, 1812), III, 159, contain the only comments which I have found by people who had seen the manuscript of the play.

¹³ In this play, Pizarro and Valverde each vacillate between nobility and evil, and Davilla, a minor character in the other versions, is a major character who furnishes a new motif to the play in his rivalry with Pizarro for leadership.

There were two blank-verse adaptations of the play. Whitelaw Ainslie felt that Sheridan's failure to use blank verse was a blemish in a play which otherwise reflected the "genius and fine taste of Mr. SHERIDAN."¹³ His *Pizarro, or, The Peruvian Mother*, in spite of its new subtitle and his claim that "many new sentiments . . . have been interwoven,"¹⁴ is for the most part a blank-verse rendition of Sheridan's lines. There are a few minor changes—elaborations on Orozembo's eulogium on Alonzo in Act I and on Elvira's entrance into the prison in Act IV—and the addition of a speech, which Genest found incomprehensible,¹⁵ to the finale.

The Rev. Matthew West's *Pizarro* does not appear to be available in this country.¹⁶ The title page of the play states that it is "in blank verse, preserving as faithfully as was practicable the original dialogue."¹⁷ It probably was based on one of the literal translations published in 1799.

Six literal translations of Kotzebue's play are extant. Matthew Gregory ("Monk") Lewis' *Rolla; or, The Peruvian Hero*¹⁸ appears to be the best one. There is no alteration of Kotzebue's play: the dramatis personae and even the original act and scene divisions are retained. The dialogue is unlabored, and the translation, in spite of some pompous criticisms by Thomas Dutton to the contrary,¹⁹ is correct.

Anne Plumptre's literal translation²⁰ appeared in 1799. This translation is neither as literal nor as good as Lewis'. She often elaborated on Kotzebue's sentimentality,²¹ and occasionally made errors in translation which were meticulously hunted out by Dutton. Benjamin Thompson's translation²² was not destined to attain the popularity of his translation of *Menschenhaß und Reue*, which was used by Sheridan

Cora, here Ataliba's daughter as well as Alonzo's wife, is loved by Alonzo and Rolla, both of whom pay her court and bitterly assail each other on her account. It is Alonzo who is killed at the end; with his last breath he begs Cora to take Rolla for her husband. Elvira promises her hand to the reformed Valverde, her first seducer, "when I find I can give you my hand with honour to you, and pleasure to myself." The play ends with a tableau of "all with hands devoutly lifted up to Heaven."

¹³ Author's preface to *Pizarro, or, The Peruvian Mother: A Tragedy*, taken with occasional variation from the prose drama of Mr. Sheridan by Whitelaw Ainslie, M.D. (Edinburgh, 1817).

¹⁴ *Idem*.

¹⁵ *Some Account of the English Stage* (Bath, 1832), VII, 423.

¹⁶ Nicoll, *op. cit.*, p. 315, was unable to locate a copy of this play in England. Of the sources I have seen, only the writer of the entry in *Biographia Dramatica*, III, 159, appears to have seen a copy of this play, which is described as "12 mo. 1799. Printed at Dublin," but not reviewed.

¹⁷ Quoted in *Biographia Dramatica*, III, 159.

¹⁸ 2nd edition (London, 1799).

¹⁹ Thomas Dutton, *Pizarro in Peru; or, The Death of Rolla*, 2nd edition (London, 1799). The notes on pp. 10 and 26, for example, illustrate Dutton's rather than Lewis' errors.

²⁰ *The Spaniards in Peru; or, The Death of Rolla* (London, 1799).

²¹ For example, on Alonzo's directions for his burial, in I, iv.

²² *Pizarro or, the Death of Rolla*, in Volume I of Benjamin Thompson, *The German Theatre* (London, 1800-1801).

for *The Stranger*. It is, however, adequate and literal, except for some minor speeches²³ and one or two minor errors in translation.²⁴

Thomas Dutton's *Pizarro in Peru; or, The Death of Rolla* was written for the purpose "of addressing a few candid strictures" on literature and the stage to the public.²⁵ His notes on Sheridan's play and its performances and his "strictures" on other translations of the play, although at times justified, are marked by a superciliousness of tone and a pompous condescension which were criticized at the time²⁶ and appear ludicrous today. His own translation is not superior to the better of the other translations, although it is as a whole more accurate. Dutton, however, usually elaborates by a few words or phrases the speeches of the German play.

Richard Heron's translation,²⁷ although its title page claims it to be a translation of Kotzebue's play, is incomplete—after Act I speeches are often omitted—and ends with an abridged version of Sheridan's finale, although it has none of Sheridan's earlier changes which prepare for this new ending. The translation is poor: the German diction is often evident in the English, which is occasionally grammatically inaccurate. *Biographia Dramatica* rightly finds "little to recommend in this piece" (III, 159).

Charles Smith's *Pizarro*,²⁸ one of the "several bad translations from Kotzebue," as they were labeled by Dunlap,²⁹ appeared in 1800. The claim made on the title page, that the play was "translated from the German of Kotzebue," is fraudulent. The play is a copy of Sheridan's adaptation until the end of Sheridan's fourth act. From that point on Smith copied Thompson's translation of the parts which Sheridan had omitted in his adaptation, and starting with the third scene of Sheridan's last act, Thompson's translation is copied exclusively, with occasional minor paraphrasing. It is difficult to understand why Smith thus interpolated Thompson's translation into Sheridan's play. Perhaps, in an attempt to profit from the popularity of the play, Smith thought that he could foist another "original" edition on the public. Since Sheridan's *Pizarro* had already been published in New York in 1799, it is understandable why Smith's "translation" was not published again.

All these English versions of *Die Spanier in Peru* are, of course, important primarily only from a bibliographical standpoint. But the frequency with which this play was adapted and translated for so many years is as interesting a phenomenon as is the frequency with

²³ In I, iii, and IV, iv.

²⁴ Such as "sad consolation" for "Leidiger Tröster" in III, iii.

²⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 17.

²⁶ See, for example, *Monthly Review*, 2nd series, XXIX (August, 1799), 450.

²⁷ *Pizarro, or the Death of Rolla* (London: A. MacPherson, n.d.). *Biographia Dramatica*, III, 159, dates the play 1799. Nicoll, *op. cit.*, p. 268, and CBEL, II, 486, mistakenly attribute this play to Robert Heron. The play, like those of "A North-Briton" and Ainslie, is extremely rare.

²⁸ *Pizarro; or The Spaniards in Peru* (New York, 1800).

²⁹ *History of the American Theatre*, Appendix, p. 410.

which it was performed. It is even more curious, however, since the play could not have had anywhere near the appeal to the reader that it had had to the theatergoer. The ultimate explanation for the many adaptations and translations unquestionably lies in the phenomenal popularity of Sheridan's *Pizarro*.

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THE FICTION OF ALBERTO MORAVIA PORTRAIT OF A WASTELAND

By SERGIO J. PACIFICI

The recent translation by Angus Davidson of Alberto Moravia's first novel, *Gli indifferenti* (which dates back to 1929),¹ and the enthusiastic reception it has received,² make it imperative for the literary critic to take a fresh look at the corpus of fiction of this novelist and attempt to reach that synthesis which new perspectives often afford. Much of the impatience and dissatisfaction that the recent criticism of this writer's work will cause stems largely from the fact that it has not moved in an ascending line, placidly remaining on a secure, but dull, horizontal plane. The majority of these writings have been confined to a more or less intelligent exposition of the single work in question, with little or no reference to the other works—some of which surpass by far both in craftsmanship and content the better known novels, such as *La romana* and *Il conformista*. The reader has therefore never been able to gain access to a higher vantage point (which must exist, now that Moravia has been writing for almost a quarter of a century) from which to survey his work and the world therein created, no matter how rapidly or how panoramically, and try to catch its essential characteristics and moods.

To be sure, one of the most distressing shortcomings of this criticism, which somehow has lost sight of the forest for the tree, has been its failure to view Moravia's work as a continuous and ever-continuing whole.³ In fact, each individual creation represents, to some extent at least, a broader restatement and an inevitable extension of that world of the middle class, first powerfully sketched in *Gli indifferenti*, a novel whose importance could hardly be overestimated since it contains in *nuce* the germs of all succeeding works and establishes the central mood of "indifference."⁴ As the reader moves from one novel to the next, he is made progressively more aware of the flaws of this society and, thanks to an ever-increasing depth of observation and perception of the author, can finally translate what could otherwise be termed a "realistic" representation of our state of affairs into symbols of *la condition humaine*. Simultaneously, too, as the years have passed and the novelist has become more agile with, and confident of,

¹ My quotations are from the second edition (Milano, 1933).

² Cf. especially Frances Keene's long article "Moravia Moralist," in the *Nation*, May 23, 1953, pp. 438-40.

³ In this respect one might reread with profit a neglected self-presentation written by Moravia in the weekly *La fiera letteraria* ("Scrittori allo specchio," Sept. 19, 1946, p. 2) and especially the following admission: "i miei libri vanno considerati tutti una sola storia, per adesso, credo, non conclusa."

⁴ A definition of this "indifference" pervading Moravia's work I presented in a paper read at the MLA Convention, December, 1953 ("Alberto Moravia and 'The Age of Indifference'")—a paper which will be published in the near future in *Symposium*.

his resources, he has also become conscious of those attitudes which, though remarkably mature in his first novel, have come to be more calculated and elaborate, reaching for subtler and more universal meanings.

What is this world Moravia writes about? It is undeniable that he writes, as any other writer undoubtedly does, about the world he knows best. But it is equally true that he writes about a world often corrupt and usually immoral, because through it he can dramatize those issues close to him and to his "situation," the situation of a writer living and writing in a country rich in traditions and poor in energy, a country long accustomed to living on the borderline of destruction and tyranny. His insistence on his special world of the bourgeoisie, "the petty bourgeoisie of eternal Rome, that is, one of the most provincial capitals of the world,"⁵ where often one character seems to be the haunting shadow of another previously encountered in these queer environments, is dictated by an inner reason, and not by literary considerations or by implicit wishes to "do it one better"—even though this is probably the most persistent accusation one reads in certain Italian critical circles. Moravia writes about a world which, repugnant as it may be in all its aspects, is an inseparable part of his sensibility and personality.

This world, as even a cursory glance at his work would soon reveal, is that of the Italian middle class. The orientation of this novelist is a matter of some interest, since few writers before him or in the recent past have tried their hand at a broad portrayal of the middle class in such incisive and lucid manner. Perhaps the most illustrious of these writers was Italo Svevo (pseud. of Ettore Schmitz), a writer who has achieved his just place of prominence in Italian letters only in recent years, long after his death. From Svevo, Moravia inherited the remarkably disinterested and pseudo-scientific method of character analysis. From another of his contemporaries, Pirandello (whose far-reaching influence in world literature remains to be determined), Moravia learned that the responsibility for the shabbiness and hypocrisy and cruelty prevailing in the modern world must be placed on the ruling class—the bourgeoisie. After the experience of realism and decadentism, after the discoveries of Freud, the time was most propitious for a writer like Moravia, who, having absorbed the teachings of his contemporaries, would visualize in almost cynical terms the obsessions and frailties of modern Man.

Generally speaking, Moravia's characters, like Svevo's, are comfortably settled in society and little plagued by the harsh necessity of earning a living. There is, nevertheless, much concern for money in his early fiction (something transmitted to us, in terms of literary

⁵ Renato Poggioli, "The Italian Success Story," *Wake*, No. 12 (1954), p. 17. It is hoped that this brilliant article will be read by all who have tried in the past to find some plausible explanation for the success Italian fiction has encountered in Europe and in the United States in the postwar years.

traditions, by the novels of Balzac and Zola), and *la question de l'argent* forms the very moving force of at least one novel, *Le ambizioni sbagliate* (1936). This struggle for money, power, station in life, expensive clothes, and jewels forms an important obsession of these characters, and betrays that sense of insecurity and instability which contribute so much to their final ruin. To achieve these riches for which they long, they must engage in intrigues, plans, and plots of one sort or another, until it becomes apparent that their dominating preoccupation is, if not talking about money, at least how to get their hands on large quantities of it.

It is against this background of material comfort, apparent or otherwise, real or not, that the Moravian hero is projected. Likewise, it is this material solidity that shields the true moral fiber of this society, veneering it with an efficient coating of respectability and pride. But beneath these confounding appearances, there is little else. Thus, the relationships among the members of this society are always conducted outside of, or with no concern with, a preestablished and respected code of ethics, and the success of this intercourse hangs on the tenuous and questionable, but always short-lasting, pleasure derived from sexual intercourse. For love, as dedication and simple affection, is very seldom admitted even in the smallest unit of the society—the family. And the ties usually binding together the members of such an entity break down, becoming only a formal, external, and really meaningless affair. The best way to explain this relationship is to say that it exists only *de facto* and contributes nothing whatever to an intimate “knowledge” of the other members of the family. Consequently mothers become estranged from their children, the children become alienated from one another, and this relationship, once a dignified and solid matter, degenerates and comes to be expressed in terms of “hate.” Adriana (*La romana*), for instance, interprets her boy-friend Giacomo Diodati’s feeling for his family in these terms:

egli nutriva contro la sua famiglia un'avversione, un'antipatia, un disgusto che . . . riuscivano davvero incomprensibili. Ed eguale antipatia, eguale avversione, eguale disgusto, sembrava provare verso se stesso, per quello che era e che faceva. Però quest'odio di se stesso non poteva essere che un riflesso del suo odio per la sua famiglia. In altre parole, sembrava odiare in se stesso tutta quella parte che era rimasta attaccata alla sua famiglia, o che, comunque, aveva subito l'influenza dell'ambiente familiare.⁶

Similarly Stefano, the sickly and penniless degenerate in *Le ambizioni sbagliate*,⁷ readily admits that the death of his sister would be an excellent thing. And Luca Mansi, the protagonist of *La disubbidienza*, realizes that the love he once nourished for his family has suddenly vanished, and what was once his strongest tie with life has mysteriously ceased to exist.

Certainly the most correct observation one can make about this

⁶ *La romana* (Milano, 1947), p. 372.

⁷ *Le ambizioni sbagliate* (Milano, 1935).

world is that it is filled with people whose indifference has rendered them callous and insensitive to the passions and sentiments of life. And Debenedetti's keen comment would then seem to synthesize the situation of this world, "where every capacity for energy, moral or immoral, in good or evil, is resolved in a kind of mediocre and obstinate acceptance of one's own vices."⁸ Yet, despite the coarse nature of the Moravian hero's moral conscience, he still preserves a strong nostalgia for "the good old times," for a past which the imagination, for all its efforts, can seldom recapture and preserve in its full vividness:

Come doveva essere bello il mondo . . . [Michele comments in one of his many monologues] quando non si pensava tanto, e il primo impulso era sempre quello buono; quando la vita non era come ora ridicola, ma tragica, e si moriva veramente, e si uccideva, e si odiava, e si amava sul serio, e si versavano vere lagrime per vere sciagure, e tutti gli uomini erano fatti di carne e di ossa ed erano attaccati alla realtà come alberi alla terra.⁹

These moments of nostalgia are rare, of course. For only seldom can he rise out of his lethargy and indolence and objectively examine his conscience. More often than not, it is violence that occupies his mind. In a world where cruelty and isolation prevail, the men and women acting their drama on this desolate stage seldom strive to formulate in concrete terms a certain conduct of life. They accept without question what they are, and fear and remorse seldom haunt their hearts. What these people face is the everyday reality of a world they abhor, but in which they are doomed to live and suffer their particular anxieties—the anxieties of petty people, without backbone or dignity, without courage, and, for all their introspection, without power of self-criticism. And while they do manage to gather enough courage to go on living, the realization that their lives are stupid and mean and senseless looms large in their minds.

The parable of a sick humanity is repeated over and over again: Michele sinks back into his indifference; Pietro returns to the status quo of the ambitious journalist; Marcello the conformist persists in his foolish conformity, and the lesson of history is of no avail to him. To accept what we are, then, to accept it and make our peace with it, and thus find the strength to live. Submissiveness is the central solution, and with this torpid conduct in the background anger plays its part. A moment of respite can seldom be found. Religion never offers any comfort to these struggling souls, and when it does, it comes closer to a kind of superstition than to the customary, dogmatic, and yet unselfish devotion: "Mi piaceva la Madonna [says Adriana in *La romana*] perché era così diversa dalla mamma, così severa e tranquilla, riccamente vestita, che mi guardava con affetto; e mi sembrava che fosse lei la mia vera madre e non la mamma che strillava sempre ed era sempre trafelata e malvestita."¹⁰

⁸ G. B. Debenedetti, *Saggi critici*, II, a serie (Roma, Oet., 1945), p. 203.

⁹ *Gli indifferenti*, pp. 238-39.

¹⁰ *La romana*, p. 109.

But calm passages of this kind are unusual, and more often it is true anger that reigns. For life, now completely devoid of any ideal or goal, soon becomes an unbearable drudge, made even worse by the events which inexorably go against the moods or passions of these individuals: "Sono triste [comments Luca Sebastiani, a young architect] . . . sono triste e rabbioso e inquieto . . . perché dovrei ridere? . . . che necessità ho di ridere?"¹¹ Gemma, after having listened to her fiancé's plans for their wedding, realizes that "molto spesso [si sentiva] bollire di rabbia, di noia e di insofferenza."¹² Once she is married, a deep, disgusting disappointment sets in, and then "pensieri di rabbia, e di impazienza presero sempre più a dominarla."¹³ Hate and anger are the dominating moods of these characters—hate for the mother and the family, for society and the world, whose history, as Giacomo Diodati acknowledges, is "nothing but a long yawning of boredom."¹⁴ Once more, it befalls a simple prostitute to perceive that "nessuno era colpevole; e . . . tutto era come doveva essere; sebbene tutto fosse insopportabile . . . tutti erano innocenti e colpevoli nel tempo stesso."¹⁵

This hate is basically an inevitable reflection of the temperament of these people. Unable to shake themselves out of their indifference, they view life as something which brings only tedium and wretchedness, and must therefore be met with a philosophy of negatives: suicide, murder, hate, anger, spite. Luca Mansi proposes to disobey his parents, his teachers, his friends, and finally the world. After disobeying his teachers, he realizes that his disobedience, to which he has committed himself and which now forms the theme of his life, can be extended to other fields, "poteva investire anche altre cose che per essere normali e ovvie gli erano sinora sfuggite; gli affetti per esempio; e, in un caso estremo che subito l'affascinò, il fatto stesso di vivere."¹⁶ Life must be denied, then, because for one thing it offers a preëstablished order which these personages are in no condition to change, no matter how slightly. Hence the disorder, the streak of meanness and spite running deep in their temperament.

When viewed from this perspective, it is easier to see that the weather itself, so turbulent and dismal, plays something of a symbolic part in the fiction of Moravia. Heavy and steady rains are forever falling on this landscape—a landscape of such desolation and despair, even in its rare moments of beauty, that the author can hardly find in it a source of consolation. No discord is indeed ever registered between the weather and the "mood" of these characters. It rains steadily throughout the action of *Gli indifferenti* and most of *Le*

¹¹ "La tempesta," *I Racconti di Moravia*, in *Opere Complete (O.C.)*, I (Milano, 1952), 310.

¹² "La provinciale," *O.C.*, I, 114.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

¹⁴ *La romana*, p. 377.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 293.

¹⁶ *La disubbidienza* (Milano, 1948), p. 28.

ambizioni sbagliate, a rain which, together with a furious wind, renders the atmosphere all the more violent. And it is this rain, in its insistence and monotony, which seems almost to persist in denying any chance of salvation or survival. Perhaps, too, rain stands for more than mere weather: it stands for utter melancholy, for the longing and the pain experienced in this fiction. And Leopardi's depiction of Nature as something harsh, unsympathetic, and finally inimical to Man looms large in the background. Rains, too, often generate tedium, that *noia* Leopardi once described as of the same substance as the air itself, which fills the spaces unoccupied by physical objects. And it is in this atmosphere of tedium and wretchedness that the Moravian hero is destined to live.

Rain becomes then a symbol of anguish and loneliness. Michele, walking in the crowded yet "empty" streets of Rome, thinks about the sorry mess in which he finds himself and the predicament which will certainly strangle him. Suddenly, he finds a striking analogy between his own life and the rainy boulevards: "questa strada piovosa era la sua vita stessa, percorsa senza fede e senza entusiasmo, con gli occhi affascinati dagli splendori della pubblicità luminosa . . . l'angoscia l'opprimeva. . . ."¹⁷ Rain beats inexorably on this wasteland, and its wetness and coldness are as hard to bear as the rain of fire falling on Dante's sinners, for the bodies of these people are never left in peace by the tormenting feverish passion of their senses. Hence sex and the problems it generates are always present in, if not at the very center of, the fiction of Moravia.

The gamut of this novelist, when it comes to the passions of the flesh, is probably one of the most sensitive and engrossing in modern Italian literature. From the bombastic sensuality of Brambilla ("Inverno di malato") to the sensuous meanness of Lorenzo, who in a moment of customary depression throws his mistress' clothes on the floor for the sheer pleasure of watching her make "awkward movements of an unlovable animal,"¹⁸ to the sadistic sensuality of the members of the Tennis Club ("Delitto al circolo di Tennis"), who after undressing an older woman, notorious for her past love affairs but now in decadence, end what had begun as a farcical jest by accidentally killing her and then hiding her body in a trunk.

In contrast to the characters of a writer like Hemingway, their sinking into a state of mere sensuality is always a conscious act, a supreme gratification of the appetite. Commonly this appetite of the flesh is more strongly felt during the hot months of the summer—as indeed in the work of another famous story-teller, whose *Decameron* Moravia has often professed to admire as a supreme artistic achievement and whose form he has long regarded as an exemplary model. Silvio, the architect, working during the summer drawing the plans

¹⁷ *Gli indifferenti*, p. 139.

¹⁸ "Fine di una relazione," *O.C.*, I, 74.

for a house for a couple who are soon to be married, finds himself in a typical situation:

Il caldo estivo, avvicinandosi la *fiamma del solleone*, si faceva ogni giorno più forte, come avviene nei temperamenti giovani e robusti, invece di stancarlo, gli infondeva un vigore felice di cui non ricordava in vita sua di aver mai avuto l'eguale. Gli sembrava di *bruciare* senza consumarsi; la città gli appariva tutta di pietra, deserta sotto il cielo *incendiato*, con le piazze e le strade *combuste* dalla bianca canicola; una *voluttà* forte e ronzante gli entrava in corpo appena usciva dal buio fresco della pensione nella *ardente* luce del *sole*. Questa *sensualità estiva e bestiale*, dopo i lunghi mesi mortificati dell'inverno, trovavano *sfogo sul corpo* fin troppo docile e compiacente dell'Amelia. [Italics mine.]¹⁹

The combination of adjectives in the foregoing passage is truly remarkable. Every one of these modifying words is always understood in terms of weather—sensuality, and the intensity of the heat, interior and exterior, is felt through and through. Of course, concern with sex plays an important role in this fiction not merely because it has come to form a dominant concern of our generation—so conscious of Freud and Freudian psychology—but because it is, in the final analysis, the only pleasure afforded by Nature to the bourgeois of Moravia and which can serve, as it were, as a means of escape from a world of boredom and nothingness. For sexual intercourse represents here not only a typical momentary pleasure, but a respite from the emptiness to which these characters are relegated. They have no purpose in life, and their trivial adventures with corrupt mothers and wives or with lowly prostitutes grant a momentary consciousness of “being” which they would otherwise lack in their social world. The cult of sexual love very seldom passes over into a cult of true love: usually these creatures plan their seductions, achieve a certain success, and then leave their mistresses to return home—to their loneliness and torment.

Of course there are exceptions: in *La romana* Moravia makes a successful attempt to render the relationship of Adriana's carnal love, the love of a prostitute, into a kind of religion, thus “taking on” a particular meaning which reattaches itself to the Christian conception of Love as Caritas. It is through this love that Adriana finds meaning and hope in an otherwise chaotic world. But Adriana, one may add, is unique. More generally, although these characters do find escape in sexual love, they are bound to realize that their longing for affection and true love can never be satisfied because they cannot love. As in the case of Lorenzo, who simply states to his mistress: “Il male è che io non ti voglio bene,”²⁰ the same observation could be made, *mutatis mutandis*, by all the characters populating these scenes. Thus Tullio, the miserly lawyer in the short story “L'avaro,” recognizes that “la mia vita è vuota. . . . E' vero che mangio bevo e dormo bene, ma chi non fa lo stesso? e invece è l'amore che è quello che più m'importa, l'amore che solo può dare uno scopo alla vita e, quando manca, niente

¹⁹ “L'architetto,” *O.C.*, I, 230-31.

²⁰ “Fine di una relazione,” *O.C.*, I, 73.

può sostituirlo, l'amore mi è negato."²¹ This, I must admit, is rather too explicitly expressed for such an objective writer as Moravia, but certainly represents the crux of the question! It is curious to observe, on the other hand, that once Tullio has found in Elena de Gasperis the kind of woman who could give him that true affection he so desperately needs, he lets his financial scruples have the better of him and makes a hasty withdrawal. But this move does not evoke surprise, since these adventures are, as Silvio remarks, "superficial and without consequence."²²

Thus the final aim of these entanglements, often displeasing and more often troublesome, is the satisfaction of the libidinous passion of the senses. The young and inexperienced student Giannamaria, for example, is quickly attracted by the beauty of another boarder, Santina, who is the forefront for a couple of dubious morals who make their living exploiting people's need for affection. At the least intentionally provocative act, Giannamaria visualizes *tout court* his possessing the thin and burning body of Santina, "under the icy sheets of one of those immense and squeaking beds of the *pension*."²³ It is this urge for sensuous love which spells disaster for the student: he is robbed of a large sum of money lent to him by a generous uncle. His only consolation is provided by the more disinterested love of the owner of the boarding house, with whom he engages in a most promising liaison. There is something quite repulsive about this way of procuring love; but just as repulsive is the way in which this love, once within easy reach (cf. the example of Tullio), is sold short and quickly brushed aside. Cosma, lying next to Albina after their love-making, thinks about the lies "with which the woman had inoculated him"²⁴ and finally sizes up the true motivation of his conduct toward her.

Here, too, as in *La romana*, the author almost steps forward and suggests the true essence of their relationship: for Cosma does not realize "that just one kiss from this woman held more truth than all the other moving tales she had tried to palm off on him a little while before; and that it held more strength for his future than all his plans of redemption."²⁵ But this awareness is only occasional. More often, the Moravian character glosses over in his mind the fact that, for all his love-making, life, without the true love which is denied to him, is an unbearable burden. As a recent commentator has pointed out,²⁶ true relationship between individuals can be established only on love and integrity and understanding. When these sentiments are non-existent or unrecognizable feelings, the relationship breaks down, and the status quo of "indifference" is upheld and maintained.

²¹ "L'avaro," *O.C.*, I, 158.

²² "L'architetto," *O.C.*, I, 227.

²³ "L'imbroglio," *O.C.*, I, 265.

²⁴ "L'avventuriera," *O.C.*, I, 459.

²⁵ *Idem*.

²⁶ Thomas G. Bergin, "The Moravian Muse," *Virginia Quarterly Review*, Vol. 29 (Spring, 1953), pp. 215-25.

Some time ago, the Italian critic Gaetano Trombatore, sketched out the world of Moravia in these terms.

E' un mondo di relazioni puramente convenzionali, che non è tenuto insieme da nulla, senza affetti veri e senza interessi; un mondo che vive solo di bassi appetiti facilmente soddisfatti e non piglia nulla sul serio, neanche il sesso, che pure vi ha tanta parte; dove anche le cose più innocenti, la pioggia e la pasta asciutta, diventano cose impure; e dove, accanto ai profumi artificiali, si respira solo il lezzo del coito e del vomito. I motivi vitali di questa spicciola umanità non vanno oltre i piccoli intrighi e le gratuite perfidie, i giochi meschini della vanità, del calcolo e dell'astuzia; per questi, o pei motivi affini, si può giungere anche al delitto, e non cambia nulla.²⁷

There is little room for disagreement here, for this is, to be sure, the landscape and the humanity of this fiction. And yet, one cannot say that hope is completely excluded from it. We find evidence of this in an utterance of the protagonist of a short story written in the early 'thirties: "non vivo . . . ma sogno; quest'incubo non durerà mai abbastanza per convincermi che non è incubo ma realtà; e un giorno mi desterò e riconoscerò il mondo, il sole, le stelle, gli alberi, il cielo, le donne e tutte le altre belle cose; bisogna perciò che io abbia pazienza: il risveglio non può che venire."²⁸ In *Agostino*, likewise, the protagonist, walking on the sandy beach, wonders:

Chissà se forse, camminando sempre diritto davanti a sé, lungo il mare, sulla rena bianca e soffice, non sarebbe arrivato in un paese dove tutte quelle cose non esistevano. In un paese dove sarebbe stato accolto come voleva il cuore, e dove gli fosse stato possibile dimenticare tutto quanto aveva appreso, per poi riapprenderlo senza vergogna né offesa, nella maniera dolce e naturale che pur doveva esserci e che oscuramente avrebbe voluto. Guardava alla caligine che sull'orizzonte avvolgeva i termini del mare, della spiaggia e della boscaglia e si sentiva attratto da quella immensità come dalla sola cosa che avrebbe potuto liberarlo dalla servitù.²⁹

Signs scattered here and there do point to a new vision. The "woman of Rome" (Adriana), ironically enough a meek prostitute, finds through love a just attitude toward mankind—and thanks to her love is able to bear the injustices inflicted upon her by a cruel world. Agostino longs for a "promised land"—and in a sense his painful longing is shared by Michele (*Gli indifferenti*) and a host of other characters in Moravia's less-known fiction. Marcello the conformist, having just repented after a vicious life of political and moral conformity, is killed by bullets from a plane on a strafing mission, in what might even be seen as a symbolic death dictated by a Justice which must exist, if Life is to continue.

But what, someone may be tempted to ask, if such a change should not take place? Will the fiction of Alberto Moravia have the same

²⁷ Gaetano Trombatore, "Il punto su Moravia," *Società*, VII, No. 4 (December, 1951), 615.

²⁸ "Fine di una relazione," *O.C.*, I, 76.

²⁹ *Agostino* (Milano, 1945), pp. 90-91.

meaning and importance than heretofore? To answer this is to beg the question, for in the process of examining the traits peculiar to this fiction, we have often tended to disregard the artist's prerogative of selecting the vantage point from which to take a good long look at the world surrounding him, and eventually distill his "knowledge" into a coherent and poignant vision. While one is certainly cognizant of the fact that Moravia's vision is limited (and thus grant the point to critics like Trombatore), in all fairness to this artist we must also perceive the intensity and "truthfulness" with which this vision has been presented.

As the characteristics of this world have been touched upon in these pages, we have discerned another element which, as yet, holds an unfulfilled promise. To enlarge the vision, to broaden the view, to move constantly to higher perspectives, would seem inevitable indications of maturity—and these no one would deny that Moravia does possess. But to see and to touch, to paint and to tell, is not enough. It is only when an artist has shown himself rich not only in human knowledge but in sympathy, capable of suffering with the creatures of his imagination so as to bear this thing called Life, that we have tangible evidence that the man has reached the peak which only great writers can ascend. The seeds have been planted in such works as *Agostino* and *La romana*; it remains to be seen whether they will ever blossom in their full splendor and fascination.

Yale University

SPATIAL ANXIETY IN THE POEMS OF BARNABOOTH

By ROBERT CHAMPIGNY

Anxiety may be viewed imaginatively as a cleavage. Social anxiety concerns the experience of being cut off from an interhuman reality (society, milieu, family, etc.). Spatial anxiety emphasizes our experience of being subjects in a world of objects, of somehow being thrown into and torn from the fullness of the world. The temporal cleavage concerns our experience of being other than ourselves, since we are and are not our past and our future.

The poems and the diary of Barnabooth use two of these fundamental "cleavages" as main themes. In the prose of the diary Valéry Larbaud dwells on the social cleavage. In the poems, the stress is laid on the spatial cleavage. It is with the poems and with this theme that this article is mainly concerned.

The concrete experience of a spatial cleavage is movement, which Sartre calls a "lézarde" in the wall of Being (*L'Être et le Néant*, p. 265). However, movement may be viewed in an opposite way, in a Bergsonian way. It consists in placing oneself within the movement, like a fish in water. Movement thus assumes fullness. Larbaud seldom expresses movement in this way. He writes:

Prête-moi ton grand bruit, ta grande allure si douce,
Ton glissement nocturne à travers l'Europe illuminée,
O train de luxe! (55)¹

But in order that movement may be treated as an earnest, full experience, it must be humanized, it must become force, progress; it needs a dynamic finality. That is what is missing in the poetry of Barnabooth, and his diary shows his stagnation, in spite of periodic illusions of progress which he soon abandons.

For this perpetual traveler, life is a stream, but reality is what borders the stream, the immobile banks. Torn between his life and his conception of reality, he reminds us less of a fish than of a wrecked hull, heavy with useless gold. For a life made of movement, Barnabooth paradoxically adopts a philosophy of Being. In this type of philosophy, as is shown by the paradoxes of Parmenides and Zeno, movement is an unintelligible scandal, a superfluous emptiness added to the fullness of Being. Whether the moving body of Barnabooth be a train, a yacht, or a car, he feels inessential, superfluous in relation both to the stream and to the banks.²

¹ Numbers between parentheses refer to the pages of Volume IV of *Œuvres complètes de Valéry Larbaud* (Paris: NRF, 1951). This volume contains the poems and the diary of Barnabooth.

² "Je n'ai pas découvert la terre ferme," notes Barnabooth in his diary (377), which shows what he is longing for. For Cartuyvels, a self-respecting bourgeois, Barnabooth is a matter of scandal.

Barnabooth does not loose himself in pure movement: he goes somewhere, he comes from somewhere. But these "somewheres" are not goals, nor are they strongly grounded origins. They are pauses, stop-overs. Barnabooth is neither in a train nor in a country, he is "entre Wirballen et Pskow," he is always *between*.

He is not in the world, he is separated from the world by the window of his train-compartment, by the porthole of his cabin. The woman who dances by the railroad track is in Spain, Barnabooth is not (94); in anxiety, he prefers to see the port from his cabin rather than land:

Quelques mois ensoleillés de ma vie sont encore là
(Tels que le souvenir me les représentait, à Londres),
Ils sont là de nouveau, et réels, devant moi,
Comme une grande boîte de jouets sur le lit d'un enfant malade.
(60)

The mask of the passer-by, of the perpetual tourist, isolates him from reality: "J'écris toujours avec un masque sur le visage" (61). He is like the movie spectator for whom reality has faded: neither the chair in which he is sitting nor the film which he is seeing are fully real.

There are glimpsed landscapes; there are stop-overs. There, Barnabooth tries to secure himself in reality. But reality is a network of relations, it is a world shaped by a past. That is what Barnabooth cannot experience. Water is lurking in the sands in which he is stranded. The pause is but a panel on which arrival and departure are written. Thus, in Scheveningue, Barnabooth celebrates the intimacy of the warm, polished barroom, but he remains outside as it were, in the same way that Baudelaire imagined a Dutch home; the room appears to Barnabooth against a background of wind and waves, of anxiety:

On eût dit un fumoir de navire ou de train:
J'avais le cœur serré comme quand on voyage;
J'étais tout attendri, j'étais doux et lointain;
J'étais comme un enfant plein d'angoisse et très sage.
(84)

Barnabooth is the lighthouse whose searchlight reveals various realities in a monotonous succession:

La route de campagne, la haie en fleur, la chaumière,
Et le bicycliste attardé, et la voiture du médecin sur la lande,
Et les abîmes déserts où le paquebot fait route.
(107)

The lighthouse, immobile in the center of movement, participates neither in the life of what its light reveals, nor even in the life of its own light:

Il y a quelque chose en moi,
Au fond de moi, au centre de moi,
Quelque chose d'infiniment aride
Comme le sommet des plus hautes montagnes:

Quelque chose de comparable au point mort de la rétine,
 Et sans écho. . . .
 Un être fait de néant, si c'est possible. (89)

This immobile center of movement is subjectivity. Subjectivity can be revealed indirectly on the objects of experience. But Barnabooth leaves his imprint on nothing, he skims the world. His dialogue with the world is limited to polite greetings. He makes gestures, he does not act. He is not even a player; he is but a dancer, *saltator*, to use a term of Cicero, a bourgeois who respected himself as such.

The most striking object in the poetry of Barnabooth is probably the abandoned railway-station at Cahors, a pre-surrealistic object in its absurdity. The station is neither a house nor a factory; nobody sleeps or works there. The station is a pause, a passage. But as this particular station is no longer in use, it is deprived of its pragmatic reality, of its instrumental sense. Between the city-houses and the "rails rouges et rugueux de rouille" (70), the abandoned station is linked neither to being nor to movement. Like Barnabooth, it is an empty façade, a false suggestion of movement.

At least this abandoned station has a past. Can Barnabooth find in his past similar roots? Nostalgia sometimes appears in his poems (71, 78, 80). Whether nostalgia be considered union or break with childhood, is this not, at least, an experience which may situate Barnabooth in relation to an authentic being: the child that he has been? Through poetic repetition, can he not achieve some sort of appropriation of this being?

The question is: has Barnabooth ever been a child? He seems to have lived his childhood in the same way that he is living his first adult years. Childhood (from the standpoint of the adult, and especially of the poet) is the substance of life, the earth from which the plant draws its food. Childhood is something stable, an absolute, the essence which our existence brings, or does not bring, to bloom and to fruit (this, let it be repeated, is the point of view of the adult, for whom childhood has assumed the status of memory).

Barnabooth is hardly in a position to think of his childhood in this way. The son of a wealthy man, his childhood was isolated from the world by a screen of conventions: "les servantes." The landscapes which he may have glimpsed were already pauses. We are told that he left South America for Ukraine at an early age. For Barnabooth, childhood cannot be the longed-for anchorage. Unlike the "bateau ivre," Barnabooth has no "flache noire et froide" to which he could return.³ Maeterlinck's *Mélanie* "did not belong here"; Barnabooth belongs nowhere. He has no emotional roots.

³ That is what he is looking for, though, if the diary is to be trusted. The dénouement shows him reaching anchorage. He marries, returns to South America. He even seems to rediscover Spanish as a mother-tongue. This "happy" ending spoils some of the interest of what precedes. For this reason, and because the poems represent a different point of view, I have kept the references to the diary to a minimum.

He mentions a village which he calls "mon village à moi" (80). But this village does not seem to "belong" to Barnabooth any more than his other pauses. Besides, we must not forget an aspect of childhood which is so important for a poet: the mother-tongue. Barnabooth has no linguistic roots: he is a polyglot. He thinks, he feels in several languages, that is to say, in none.⁴ In the poem "Voix des servantes," Spanish seems to play the role of mother-tongue. But the servants are the mother. Besides, the Spanish voices of the servants are heard in a poem written in French. Spanish has not appropriated the world of his childhood. Lacking the symbolic cement of a language, has this world any consistency in the case of Barnabooth?

His nostalgia is not fully temporal. Barnabooth, who moves in relation to the world but does not change, does not progress, can live a temporal cleavage as spatial cleavage only. His time is that of the diary, of the log-book, of the calendar, of the clock; it is a biographical time, a spatialized time: dates and places (see 58, 78, 93).

This spatial Don Juan will likewise transform the social cleavage into a spatial cleavage.

A properly social cleavage is experienced by the person who is separated from his milieu or from a person with whom he had been on intimate terms. Originally, Barnabooth does not belong to any milieu. He is neither an aristocrat nor a plebeian nor a businessman. In this son of a parvenu, the bourgeoisie finds its decomposition as a class. Barnabooth is a pariah. At the bottom of the social scale, a pariah can entertain authentic relations, if not with a milieu, at least with individuals. But even this is denied Barnabooth because of his wealth which creates a wall between him and the rest of men.

His condition makes him adopt, from the start, the standpoint of the aesthete on man. For the aesthete, man is not act and person, but gesture and object (of beauty or ugliness). From a certain point of view, Barnabooth has never been a child, but, from another point of view, he has never ceased to be a child.

Barnabooth is a pure consumer (see "Alma perdida," 75). He loves all women (114); in other words, he loves none. Women and towns, women or towns: "J'ai des souvenirs de villes comme on a des souvenirs d'amour" (118). His negative attitude toward the human leads him to two opposite reactions. First, aesthetic disgust:

Je reverrais aussi des gens que j'ai connus
Sans les aimer; et qui sont pour moi bien moins
Que les palmiers et les fontaines de la ville;
Ces gens qui ne voyagent pas, mais qui restent
Près de leurs excréments sans jamais s'ennuyer.
(60)

⁴ His muse, he tells us, is Creole. Most of the poems are written in free verse, but in sham free verse whose rhythm is often difficult to catch. The exotic thus penetrates the very form of the poems—original, absolute exoticism—for, if the poems sound like translations, these translations refer to no original. This may be the masterstroke of Larbaud.

Fancy takes him to snatch a London beggar from her condition (for a few hours), so that, like him, she may, from the outside, appreciate the town aesthetically ("Trafalgar Square la nuit," 99-100).

But most of the time he is an aesthete with a bad conscience. He would like at times to leave the burden of his emptiness and be absorbed by the fullness of a milieu:

Vivre danoisement dans la douceur danoise
De cette ville où est un château avec des dômes en bronze
Vert-de-grisés; vivre dans l'innocence, oui,
De n'importe quelle petite ville, quelque part. (92)

He would like to know these women whom he glimpsed from a train, between two trains, to know them as persons, not as toys, as "Images" (which is the title of the poem):

O mon Dieu, ne sera-t-il jamais possible
Que je connaisse cette douce femme, là-bas, en Petite-Russie,
Et ces deux amies de Rotterdam,
Et la jeune mendiante d'Andalousie
Et que je me lie avec elles
D'une indissoluble amitié? (95)

Proceeding in a direction which is familiar with aesthetes, the innocent Barnabooth sometimes states his desire to become involved in "Evil." Evil, with a capital, is negative perversity; it has no proper essence; it has been invented as an empty companion to "the Good." Despairing to be fused with a human milieu, with immobile Being, with the plenitude of the Good, Barnabooth turns toward Evil.

Practical evil cannot satisfy him. For evil then loses its negativity. It becomes a label attached to certain actions with commonplace human motives. It loses its metaphysical appeal to become a social phenomenon subject to statistics. Thus practical evil would, paradoxically, make Barnabooth enter the human sphere. But, according to him, his wealth forbids him this possibility. He cannot be a "canaille," he can but "s'encanailleur" (109). He cannot be a crook, only a kleptomaniac (*Journal Intime*, 238):

Hélas, je suis trop riche; le Mal
M'est à jamais interdit quoi que je fasse:
Je suis un Riche, naturellement bon et vertueux.
(68)

A poor excuse, or rather an ironical excuse: for he could get rid of his wealth. He has chosen to remain rich and virtuous. If he is content with the abstract ideal of Evil, it is because it is one more symbol of his condition: theological Evil is a cleavage. Whatever his melancholy laments may be, Barnabooth does not want to go further. As an aesthete, he relishes this abstract idea, and as a poet, he uses it. Barnabooth is an abstract being in the etymological sense. His acts are gestures, his emotions cannot precipitate as sentiments, since they lack a precise, stable object:

C'est peut-être du vide comme est le vide,
 Mais si grand que le Bien et le Mal ensemble
 Ne le remplissent pas.
 La haine y meurt d'asphyxie
 Et le plus grand amour n'y pénètre jamais. . . .
 Je rencontre toujours
 Hors de moi comme en moi,
 L'irremplissable Vide,
 L'inconquérable Rien. (90)

At least, this experience of nothingness and emptiness is authentic. It prevents any other emotion from taking root. The Romantics would call it "spleen"; the Kierkegaardian term of anxiety is more often used nowadays:

Je sens qu'il faut à ce cœur de vagabond
 La trépidation des trains et des navires,
 Et une angoisse sans bonheur sans cesse alimentée.
 (114)

We are also thinking of a more concrete and humorous expression of emptiness: "borborygmes," a term which Barnabooth uses to designate his poems. For those who are cut off from the world, the body becomes the world. It is no longer the tool which is used but not seen; it is no longer the language which indicates thought transparently. It sprawls in its absurd gratuity. Now, it seems that even in this last fortress, the experience of plenitude is forbidden to Barnabooth. His body becomes "borborygme," and the spatial cleavage is revealed within the body itself:

Voilà pourtant la chose incompréhensible
 Que je ne pourrai jamais plus nier;
 Voilà pourtant la dernière parole que je dirai
 Quand, tiède encore, je serai un pauvre mort "qui se vide!"
 (54)

For a historian of society, the meaning of Barnabooth is clear. But his poems are also, from the standpoint of literary history, in a precise situation. Appearing just before Cendrars's "Transsibérien" and Apollinaire's "Zone," Larbaud's poems remind us of the original sense of the word "exotic" and as such serve as a transition between Symbolism and Surrealism.

The Symbolist soul is a landscape. Forsaking the Romantic obsession of the "unbound," Symbolism is less inspired by spatial anxiety than by temporal anxiety. On the other hand, Surrealism spurns nostalgia and reduces the experience of time to the experience of a space, of a "surreal" space, of course, a space in which everything is given, but cut off from its connections, in which everything is like the flotsam of an unknown wreck.

With Larbaud, we already witness the destruction of the Symbolist landscape. Besides, we have noted that the temporal anxiety assumed, in Barnabooth, a spatial status, as he lacked a properly poetic sense

of time. Finally, the attitude of Barnabooth toward the human may also be considered transitional. Sometimes, he accepts the solitude of the aesthete and tries to exploit it poetically, as did the Symbolists. But he may also succumb to bad conscience, and then he wishes he might be integrated in a social context. Like him, the Surrealists will try to turn toward the social; like him, they will fail, for they will likewise refuse to define a practical goal and to substitute a properly ethical point of view for an aesthetic outlook.

Indiana University

REVIEWS

Piers, the Plowman: A Critical Edition of the A-Version. Edited with Introduction, Notes, and Glossary by THOMAS A. KNOTT and DAVID C. FOWLER. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1952. Pp. xiv + 302. \$4.50.

For the past forty years *Piers Plowman* scholarship has had a good deal of unfinished business on its agenda: arguments for multiple authorship have been promised but not produced; new critical editions of the texts have been announced but not published. The complexities of the fourteenth-century poet's work and of the twentieth-century scholar's world have created this tangle of loose ends. But an "explicit" is about to be written to some of these projects. The critical editions of the A, B, and C texts which R. W. Chambers and J. H. G. Grattan worked on for so many years will soon appear. And David C. Fowler has edited and seen through the press the late Thomas A. Knott's critical edition of A, which Knott began work on in 1907 and had largely completed by 1915. To this Dr. Fowler has added his own critical edition of A.

The edition is described as a compromise between a critical and a reading edition. As a critical edition it has limitations. It was impossible to include "the large body of evidence supporting the classification of MSS of the A-text" (p. 26). The choice of MS R 3.14, Trinity College, Cambridge (MS "T") as the basis of the text is quite acceptable. But by "basis" Dr. Fowler means "little more than the basis for spelling and dialect" (p. 28). And in spite of the 74 pages of textual notes it is difficult or impossible to determine the actual source of the critical readings when these are not the readings of MS T.

As a reading text the edition is largely successful. There is a good glossary and a complete, up-to-date bibliography. The explanatory notes are clear but could have been much fuller. Although they gloss all Latin quotations, they leave a good many other matters unexplained. The introduction gives the student what he needs to know about the three versions of the poem, the authorship question, meter and alliteration, and dialect. The long section entitled "Historical Backgrounds," although elementary, will probably be useful for the undergraduate, particularly because of its clear picture of the organization of the late medieval church. Unfortunately, the introduction does not discuss the poem as a literary work; it examines neither its literary type nor its particular literary qualities. Yet this is as important to the student as historical background if he is to read the poem with understanding and appreciation. These, however, are minor objections. Teachers of Middle English should welcome this book, for it makes available, at a reasonable price and in an attractive format, a good and complete text of an important fourteenth-century poem.

ROBERT WORTH FRANK, JR.

Illinois Institute of Technology

The Harmonious Vision: Studies in Milton's Poetry. By DON CAMERON ALLEN. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1954. Pp. xx + 125. \$3.00.

This work aims chiefly at a critical interpretation of Milton's major and outstanding minor poems. To the average reader the title can be troublesome, and recourse to the "Introduction" for help on the matter may fail to be fully rewarding. This section tends much to obscurity in diction and concept. The basic suggestion embodied in the title seems to be—though I am not sure—that Milton's poetic productions are largely inspired by a perception, or vision, of a divine harmonious plan underlying all creation.

The minor poems are considered, for the most part, as indexes to Milton's early artistic powers. But the reader may find himself a little perplexed here by the author's excursions into somewhat unconventional modes of expression: "Interesting as they ["these *impresas*"] are, these reiterated devices are not the main source of the poems' virtue. They are some of the instruments of the orchestra, but in themselves they are not the music produced by their ascending confluence."

Nor is the treatment of *Paradise Lost* entirely free from this sort of tortuous exposition: "Milton knew that despair is the hidden but false lining of the cloak of pride, because, as pride, it is gestated in the minds of those who are farthest from God. He knew . . . that despair on a human level sometimes attends the achievement of the impossible." For all their obscurity, however, we recognize in these statements an instance of Allen's heavy emphasis on Satan's "despair." This view of Satan's reaction to his miserable estate is, it seems to me, highly questionable and therefore an unfortunate point of reference in an interpretation of *Paradise Lost*. From the time of his awakening on the burning lake Satan is filled with desperate resolution. And although the performance of his "public" duty in the Garden of Eden imposes upon him various acts that offend his sense of dignity, he remains quite obdurate and self-reliant through it all. And we must not ignore the fact that Satan actually accomplishes his purpose. It may also be observed that the skeptical reader may find it difficult to understand Allen's attribution of "weaknesses of mind and heart" to this rather successful adversary of the Almighty.

The study of *Samson Agonistes* is the best part of the book. Here the author reveals keen insights into Milton as a humanist and sees the poem as a timeless commentary on the human scene. Not quite as much can be said for the commentary on *Paradise Regained*. It is possible that Allen has a misconception of the basic purpose of the poem and therefore fails to see the real motivation of Satan and, consequently, the true role of Christ in this work. Milton's Satan here is obviously in grave doubt concerning the outcome of his planned assaults upon his adversary and is of course therefore victim, in some measure, of the fear which Allen considers to be the basic stimulus in all his machinations. But it can be argued that this fear never drives Satan to despair, as Allen seems to think, but serves rather to reinforce a persistent and unyielding resolution to find some self-defeating weakness in the "perfect Man." In this view, Satan's motivation, throughout, becomes a beam of hope rather than a wild urge of constantly increasing terror. And in the same view, Christ's role ceases to be that of demonstrating how a divine being comes to defeat a steadily deteriorating adversary, as the author implies. It tends to appear, instead, as a dramatization of the human ideals which alone, in the poet's conception, can withstand the ever-present onslaught of concentrated evil in the very real wilderness-world in which man, as we know him, must live.

Despite my reservations, the study is an important one. Its greatest weakness, I think, lies in its partial allegiance to a traditional tendency to regard most of Milton's poems as principally doctrinaire treatises and thus to discount the possibility that they may represent, in a large sense, appeals inspired by the very practical interests of a Christian humanist. The work is stimulating, and even if it throws little new light on the major problems in criticism on Milton's poetry, it is nevertheless a valuable contribution in that it manifests vigorous and challenging interest in those problems.

E. L. MARILLA

Louisiana State University

Blake, Prophet Against Empire: A Poet's Interpretation of the History of His Own Times. By DAVID V. ERDMAN. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954. Pp. xx + 503. \$7.50.

It would probably be rash to say that William Blake has, in the past three decades, been the subject of more brilliant work than has any other English poet. However, if we call to mind the excellent pioneering of Foster Damon, the discriminating and subtle books of Schorer and Frye, and now this present piece of thorough and penetrating scholarship, the grounds for some such assertion seem fairly substantial.

Erdman's book is in certain respects the most satisfying of any of them simply because of its great richness in relevant fact. It insists on no special or involved interpretation, yet it gathers together an astonishing amount of data regarding current events and ideas from which we are irresistibly led to draw new and richer meanings for Blake's work.

On the jacket of the book, Northrop Frye is quoted in praise of what he calls Erdman's "pure scholarship." But if by "pure" we are to understand void of interpretive insight, or incapable of fresh and acute readings of the verse and the graphic art, Mr. Erdman is considerably better than "pure." He tells us what he has done in the preface, and with a verve of style that is characteristic: "I have read the newspapers and looked at the prints and paintings and sampled the debates and pamphlets of Blake's time. As Blake would say, I have 'walked up & down' in the history of that time. And I have learned to read the idiom of current allusion with sufficient familiarity to detect its presence even in Blake's obscure pages. . . . What I have attempted is a bold survey of the history of Blake's time as it swirls about and enters into the texture of his emblematic painting and poetry."

These things he has indeed done; and again and again, in lines which might seem to flow solely from Blake's inner and abstract world, he discovers to us veiled references to contemporary happenings, issues, and publications—the forms and pressures of the time. It is obviously not to be expected that all these discoveries should be equally significant or even equally convincing in point of fact. The added meanings, for example, which Erdman brings to *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* from the anti-slavery *Narrative* of Captain J. G. Stedman seem thoroughly valid and enriching. Also the suggestions that *The Chimney Sweeper* might have been prompted by a bill brought into Parliament in 1788 for the protection of the "climbing boys," and that *The Little Black Boy* should have been intended to assist the philanthropic agitations of the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade, are likely suggestions, if startling. Whether, on the other hand, the lines in *America*, "The doors of marriage are open and the priests in rustling scales / Rush into reptile coverts . . ." really refer to a crisis in the marriage law in 1781 which "disconcerted the priesthood"—this is perhaps another matter.

But, as already indicated, the book as a whole easily carries conviction. And it convinces us of a Blake different in some degree from the one we have hitherto known: a Blake radical and libertarian in all stages of his career, one who, though perhaps he did not after all save the neck of Tom Paine, was first and last a liberty boy, and guilty of no jingoistic interludes; and yet a Blake morbidly timid of giving the spies and censors of the Pitt government the slightest handle to grab him by. Indeed, Erdman suspects that political anxiety rather than pique is responsible for the nonpublication of *Poetical Sketches*.

These and other new lights are cast by this highly revealing book. What most

clearly emerges is, however, the extent to which this "pure" and "mystical" poet marked in his work the currents and eddies of the national life around him. Not merely the gross and palpable facts of the American war, the French revolution, the English crusade, and the black reaction, but the particulars, the *sub-events*, speak constantly, if furtively. We are enormously in debt to Erdman for helping us to hear them.

JAMES R. CALDWELL

University of California

American Literary Pioneer: A Biographical Study of James A. Hillhouse. By CHARLES TABB HAZELRIGG. New York: Bookman Associates, 1953. Pp. 226. \$4.00.

Mr. Hazelrigg had an opportunity and a difficult, perhaps an insoluble, problem when he decided to write the biography of James Hillhouse. A third-rate poet, living in an early and barren period of American literature, neglected, almost forgotten, who made quite a stir while alive and now for the first time becomes available for detailed and accurate study through an extensive body of manuscript material in the Yale University Library—here is the opportunity. But what can be done with a merchant poet whose life was unexceptional, whose correspondence is dull, whose verse is technically correct, obvious, imitative? The problem gets more difficult when such verse is an echoing of Milton but only to become pretentious religiosity, or an imitation of Shakespeare only to become romanticized verbiage. If there is a way to make such a life and such writing interesting and significant, Mr. Hazelrigg has not discovered it.

E. H. EBY

University of Washington

Bibliography of German Culture in America to 1940. Compiled and edited by HENRY A. POCHMANN and ARTHUR R. SCHULTZ. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1953. Pp. xxxii + 483. \$6.50.

Pochmann's intention was to supply a comprehensive and general bibliographical survey of the interrelations between Germany and the United States in the strictly cultural areas of exchange. Even a cursory inspection of the book is very impressive; a critical reading reveals the enormous amount of work and sound judgment which made this compilation possible. There are, of course, omissions; there are the inevitable errors; there are also differences of opinion with regard to bibliographical approach and organization. A critical review going beyond a mere descriptive announcement of the book must identify these controversial points. But these remarks should not obscure the fact that Pochmann, with the brilliant editorial help of Mr. Schultz, has made a major contribution to German-American bibliography.

It was a wise decision to omit those titles which are already listed in special bibliographies, such as those by Morgan and Seidensticker. However, it would have been very useful to have these bibliographies clearly identified. I would also have liked to learn the specific sources on which Pochmann's book is based.

By checking the bibliography against the catalog of Cornell University Library, a dozen titles were found which should have been included. These are: Erwin Barta, *Das Auslands-Deutschtum* (Wien, 1930); Preussische Staatsbibliothek Berlin, *Das Deutschtum im Ausland* (Berlin, 1925); *Winston Churchill, *The Crisis* (New York, 1901); Ewald Flügel, *Ausgewählte Aufsätze*

(Haile, 1930); G. A. Halem firm, *Des deutschen Buches Wert und Wirkung für das Ausland-Deutschtum* (Bremen, 1928); Max Hannemann, *Das Deutschtum in den Vereinigten Staaten* (Gotha, 1936); Theodor Erasmus Hilgard, *Briefe an seinen Freund P. H. Kraemer* (Saarbrücken, 1935); *Sophie La Roche, *Erscheinungen am See Oneida* (Leipzig, 1798); George Leibbrandt, ed., *Auswanderungsakten des deutschen Bundestages, 1817-1866* (Stuttgart, 1932); Mathilde Schley, *Deutschamerika* (Milwaukee, 1935); Ferd Schrader, *Das Buch für Auswanderer nach den Vereinigten Staaten* (Leipzig, 1853); and G. v. Skal, *Die Achtundvierziger in Amerika* (Frankfurt, 1923). The two starred items are of prime importance: La Roche was the first German author to write a novel with an American setting; Churchill's book is an almost classical description of the German-American during the Civil War.

Careful editorial work and proofreading have kept the number of mistakes to an almost incredible minimum. The following have been overlooked:

Item 6966 is wrong; the correct title is given under 1004.

Item 9420 is identical with 9419 and should be eliminated.

Item 2838 is meaningless. Seidensticker takes care of Ephrata imprints (and more recently beyond Pochmann's terminal date, the bibliography compiled by A. M. Funke, 1944).

Items 9434-9442: Sauer imprints is meaningless; three generations of the Sauer family are listed under one author heading. In a list arranged by author's name, the Bible cannot be listed under Sauer, although he was the printer, duplicating the correct entry under 781.

Items 7145-7147: Meyers Konversationslexikon. I cannot see why a popular German encyclopedia is listed at all. Why just the Meyer and not Brockhaus or Herder? And why the fourth edition and not the latest?

Pochmann's bibliographical approach, listing the titles in the vast field of cultural interrelations, is a very ambitious one. He has done everything which was humanly possible, sometimes even a little bit more. But I wonder whether a narrower approach, for instance, confining oneself to the field of Germanica-Americana proper, would not have increased the usefulness of the bibliography.

I must also raise the question of the organization of the bibliography. It seems to me that the subject approach is the essential one. Therefore, I would have preferred an arrangement by subject, either a classified arrangement or one by subject headings in alphabetical order with an author index, instead of arrangement by author with subject index. However, I realize that any arrangement by subject entails higher printing cost and that may well have been the deciding factor.

It is obvious that no one can compile a bibliography without some disagreement with his fellow bibliographers with regard to selection, approach, and organization. I feel certain, however, that in spite of these differences of opinion the Pochmann-Schultz bibliography will be unanimously considered an indispensable tool.

FELIX REICHMANN

Cornell University

Friedrich Hebbel's Conception of Movement in the Absolute and in History. By STEN G. FLYGT. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Studies in the Germanic Languages and Literatures, No. 7, 1952. Pp. 100. \$3.00, cloth; \$2.50, paper.

The original object of the study, as the preface states, was to determine

whether Hebbel's "plays exhibit a progressive or conservative tendency," but the attempt to work out a convincing answer led the author to the conclusion that the question was "incorrectly put and subordinate to the question of Hebbel's conception of movement in the Absolute and in history." Part I examines the diaries and letters which reveal "an irregularly rhythmic oscillation of Hebbel's expressed beliefs, insights and convictions." Part II shows that a similar oscillation exists in the dramatic production (though not necessarily parallel in time to the diary and letter notations). Part III, entitled "Mystic Formulations: Religio-Poetic Expression," collects Hebbel's thoughts on the cosmic process which make evident that Hebbel saw it at all times as a flux, a never-ceasing interaction of opposed forces—all life being the struggle of the individual against the Absolute. The only movement that takes place is a movement of succession, not necessarily to a higher level of existence, though that may be the case in certain instances. The fundamental problem, Flygt concludes therefore, is not so well expressed "in terms of social and historical progress as it is in terms of a metaphysical conception of a universal compact flux through a process of death-life" (p. 84). This notion of flux, the author is convinced, is connected with Hebbel's deep sense of being pushed out of life and threatened by hostile forces on every side. This hostility of life to life is expressed in many of his lyric poems.

It is gratifying that Flygt, by demonstrating the persistent inconsistencies in the diaries and the perpetual oscillations between periods of progressivism and conservatism in the dramas, should aim to make clear the "inadequacy of any *Wendepunkttheorie*" (preface). It was the parroting by the older scholars of Hebbel's proclaimed theory (which he himself later disavowed) that for so long made Hebbel scholarship rigid, sterile, and intolerably monotonous. However, the tendency to regard the evolutionary historical concept as the core of Hebbel's tragedies is no longer as dominant nor even as controversial as Flygt's preface seems to suggest, since the trail-blazing work of Ziegler (*Mensch und Welt in der Tragödie Friedrich Hebbels*, Berlin, 1938) showed how peripheral this idea was in his dramas. It is curious that neither Ziegler nor von Wiese (*Die deutsche Tragödie von Lessing bis Hebbel*, Hamburg, 1948) is listed in the bibliography, which appears, except for some recent *PMLA* articles, rather unbalanced in favor of older Hebbel criticism. But Ziegler is found tucked away in an obscure footnote, where he is credited only with coining the term "a kind of metaphysical experiment" (Part II, note 25, p. 91). While von Wiese fares somewhat better with several references, his thesis, so similar to Ziegler's, is dismissed quite summarily: "it [*Herodes und Mariamne*] is scarcely, as von Wiese seems to feel, basically a tragedy of love and secondarily an historical tragedy, but rather the tragedy of love is completely conditioned by the historical guise which the great Adversary has assumed" (p. 45). It is almost as though Flygt's right hand did not know that his left hand had just tossed the historical concept into the waste-paper basket.

It is disconcerting to find, after the promising preface and Part I, that Part II falls into the besetting sin of Hebbel scholarship of "drawing heavily" upon Hebbel's theoretical essays without distinguishing clearly enough the discrepancy between theory and practice. This is all the more surprising since attention is called in a footnote (II, note 1, p. 90), *not* in the study proper, to von Wiese's warning that "the Hegelian terminology of these essays is apt to give the impression of an optimistic and dialectic conception of history, which must be corrected by a more careful and emphatic reading of the diaries and poems, as

well as the plays." Part II suffers because Flygt fails to do what von Wiese prescribes and seems unable to free himself from the time-hallowed clichés or to disassociate himself from the old interpretations, except in an occasional footnote (II, notes 149, 193). Thus the crux of the whole matter appears almost as an afterthought in footnote 193: "It is quite true, Walzel's *Wendepunkt* theory is inadequate to account for *Demetrius*. A pertinent question is: Should not, in view of this fact, the theory be reexamined in its application to the earlier plays . . . and, if found inadequate there, too, as it seems to be, discarded?" (p. 95). It should, indeed. Ziegler did discard it; Flygt cannot quite bring himself to do so. However, he is marching in the right direction and is to be credited for that, rather than criticized for not quite successfully laying all the old ghosts.

A. M. SAUERLANDER

University of Washington

Social Criticism in the Early Works of Erich Kästner. By JOHN WINKELMAN. Columbia: University of Missouri Studies, XXV, No. 4, 1953. Pp. 144. \$2.50.

Erich Kästner, well known in America as an author of light entertainment, has doubtless raised a bushy eyebrow over eyes twinkling with merriment at finding himself selected as a topic for a doctoral dissertation.

Dr. Winkelman justifies his study of the early satirical works of this author—a study "intended for an audience of non-specialists"—as documents mirroring and interpreting the collapse of democracy in Germany and the rise of Hitler. "Kästner apprehended his time as one of social, political, economic, cultural, and moral collapse, and his writings of those fateful years from 1928 to 1932 represent an integrated and informed chronicle, protest, and warning."

Winkelman convinces that under a light, frothy, humorous, satirical exterior, Kästner has a positive ethical content. In his chapters "Structure of the Weimar Republic," "The Political Scene," "The Economic Scene," "The Social Scene," Winkelman's review of the conditions prevailing in Germany in the era in question demonstrates the objective accuracy of the warning social criticisms contained in Kästner's popular writings.

CLAIR HAYDEN BELL

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Provençal Regionalism: A Study of the Movement in the "Revue Félibréenne," "Le Feu" and Other Reviews of Southern France. By ALPHONSE V. ROCHE. Evanston: Northwestern University Studies, Humanities Series, No. 30, 1954. Pp. xix + 271. \$4.25.

There has lately been greater attention devoted in this country to the role in literature of individual periodicals and the personalities animating them; these studies have thus far been mainly doctoral dissertations on Symbolist and post-Symbolist magazines. And recently an attempt has been made to establish a sort of new discipline, that of *géographie littéraire*: see, for example, Auguste Dupouy's *Géographie des lettres françaises* (1942; 2nd ed., 1951) and the sixth *Cahier* (1954) of the Association Internationale des Etudes Françaises. Obviously this is a matter of method and of emphasis: the recognition of regional influences is not something new under the sun. In American letters we have been experiencing partisanship to regionalism—Southern, Rocky Mountain,

Southwestern, and so on. One of the claims to merit advanced by advocates of regionalism is that in the local reviews are to be found writers who express indigenous culture, capture local speech and thought, and preserve the traditions and experiences peculiar to their milieu.

These several factors—the regional periodical, literary history on a local basis, the claims and problems and purposes of a particular group within a culture complex—are some of the topics treated here. This is the fruit of at least fifteen years of research, utilizing the painstaking examination of periodicals embodying the history of the varied and sometimes conflicting ideas, the influences on, and the fortunes of southern regionalism. The result is seven well-organized chapters, each with its own summary, and a general conclusion. The notes serve also as the bibliography; they are followed by a subject-author index. Quotations in the text are mainly in English; in the notes the dialectal material is sometimes translated into French. A rather poor job of editing has done the author considerable disservice: innumerable typographical faults, inconsistencies in spelling and in capitalization, garbled identifications (e.g., p. 187, Charles Derème < Charles Derennes and Tristan Derème).

Provençal regionalism crystallized as a movement in 1854 with the establishment of the *Félibrige*, a group of seven poets "pledged to devote themselves to the revival of their mother tongue and the restoration of its literary and linguistic dignity" (p. xv). These linguistic aspirations were not successful. The people disdain to use their dialects or patois, which are on the road to extinction: "Il ne faut pas se le dissimuler, le mouvement félibréen n'a jeté aucune racine dans la masse du peuple" (P. Pansier, quoted on p. 125). Although the Institut d'Etudes Occitanes at Toulouse is active in attempting to standardize discordant practices, the "Mistraliens" demur in favor of separate unification of major dialects. In the fifth chapter of his book, Professor Roche sets forth the conflicting opinions on "this problem which, although probably destined never to be solved to the satisfaction of the *Felibres*, has always been and remains today the very 'raison d'être' of the movement" (p. 117).

The *Félibrige*, originally linguistico-literary in purpose, prepared the ground for political and social doctrines, as J. Charles-Brun tells us in his *Le Régionalisme* (Paris: Bloud, 1911, p. 142). Professor Roche relates how the *Félibrige* became involved in a semi-political and cultural mystique, "L'Idée latine," first promulgated by Claude-François Lallemand in *Le Hachyck* (1843) and given its name in 1877 by L. A. Roque-Ferrier (note 1, p. 233). Its purposes, *grosso modo*, were to oppose Pan-Germanism, to achieve a union of Latin peoples, and to keep alive autochthonous, i.e., local and/or Mediterranean, traditions. Apparently, this movement still has its adherents and is sponsored by the Institut d'Etudes Occitanes. This program is much more ambitious than the nostalgia for culture myths which the *Cahiers du Sud* exhibited in its special number (1943) on "Le Génie d'oc et l'homme méditerranéen."

Sensitivity about local customs accounts for the issue made of bullfighting: at stake was local autonomy versus imposition on the part of centralized government. Professor Roche devotes a whole chapter to the quarrel, for "After the language tradition, the one most vigorously vindicated and considered most sacred is bullfighting. No other, except that of the language, has been discussed as thoroughly in the reviews, and none, not even the latter, has been an object of so much interest and excitement among the general public. Bullfights became and still remain the symbol of southern liberties" (p. 150). The question of the south resentful of the non-southern part of France, and of federalism, is dis-

cussed under the amusing chapter-heading "North and South or Dixie Land in France."

It would be idle to speculate on what the movement would have amounted to without Mistral. His dominant role is well appreciated by Professor Roche, but he has not neglected the importance of Mariéton, Roumanille, and Aubanel. Less known is the career of *Le Feu*. Here is the story of its fortunes, the group behind it, and the writers it sponsored.

We are indebted to Professor Roche for his careful tracing of the roles played by the various periodicals. And, from the very evidence he himself submits, one can see a function of *Le Feu* perhaps incidental to his purpose—its part in the regionalist movement—its importance from a non-regional point of view. *Le Feu* gave the hospitality of its columns to authors who used it as a stepping-stone; they published in it because they needed outlets for their writings, they were relatively unknown. Their interests were not regional (even if their subject matter was), their language was not dialectal, and they were disinterested in the local concerns of the periodical except as those concerns reflected a general recent literary theory. I have in mind, for example, *naturisme*, as a doctrine, and the fact that the fledgling author published in "regional" periodicals wherever and whenever he could. One has only to consult the titles of authors and topics treated to see that *Le Feu* was publishing non-regionalists too, and it was publishing criticism on authors without regionalist intentions. Articles in *Le Feu* have their counterpart in other "little magazines" of Paris and Belgium and Italy: *Le Feu*, in its day, was as hospitable as the *Mercure de France* or *Vers et Prose* or the contemporary *Cahiers du Sud*.

We are indeed fortunate to have Professor Roche's comprehensive and "solid" monograph. Some of the pertinent records cannot be consulted in this country. Harvard, the New York Public Library, Columbia, can supply files of *L'Aidi*, *Armana Prouvençau*, *Revue félibréenne*, *Revue lyonnaise*, also the *Annales de l'Institut d'Etudes Occitanes* at Toulouse; Minnesota can furnish the *Revue du monde latin*; but Gregory's *Union List of Serials* and its supplements do not mention *Le Littéraire* or the *Revue méridionale*, and locate only one issue of *Terro d'Oc* (at Yale) and incomplete sets of *Oc* (the most extensive is at Dartmouth). Professor Roche found the *Revue de l'Aude*, forerunner of the *Revue méridionale*, in the "Archives de l'Aude" at Carcassonne (note 74, p. 258); this reviewer had to complete American files of *Le Feu* by the run at the Bibliothèque Nationale. In the notes are mentioned numerous other magazines from which information has been culled: no doubt one reason our libraries lack source material is our negligence, and another the inferior attention accorded to dialectal literature except for philological purposes.

Essentially, what Professor Roche has done is to write an up-to-date counterpart, in a new perspective, to Emile Ripert's *Le Félibrige* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1924; 3^e édition, revue et complétée, 1948). We had a general discussion from the historian's point of view in Robert K. Gooch's *Regionalism in France* (New York: Century Co., 1931; University of Virginia Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, Monograph No. 12)—here, Gooch's few allusions to literature are given a much fuller treatment. We have, thus, a study in both intellectual and literary history. May this work persuade literary provincials to broaden their outlook and undertake a similarly broad grasp of other regional movements.

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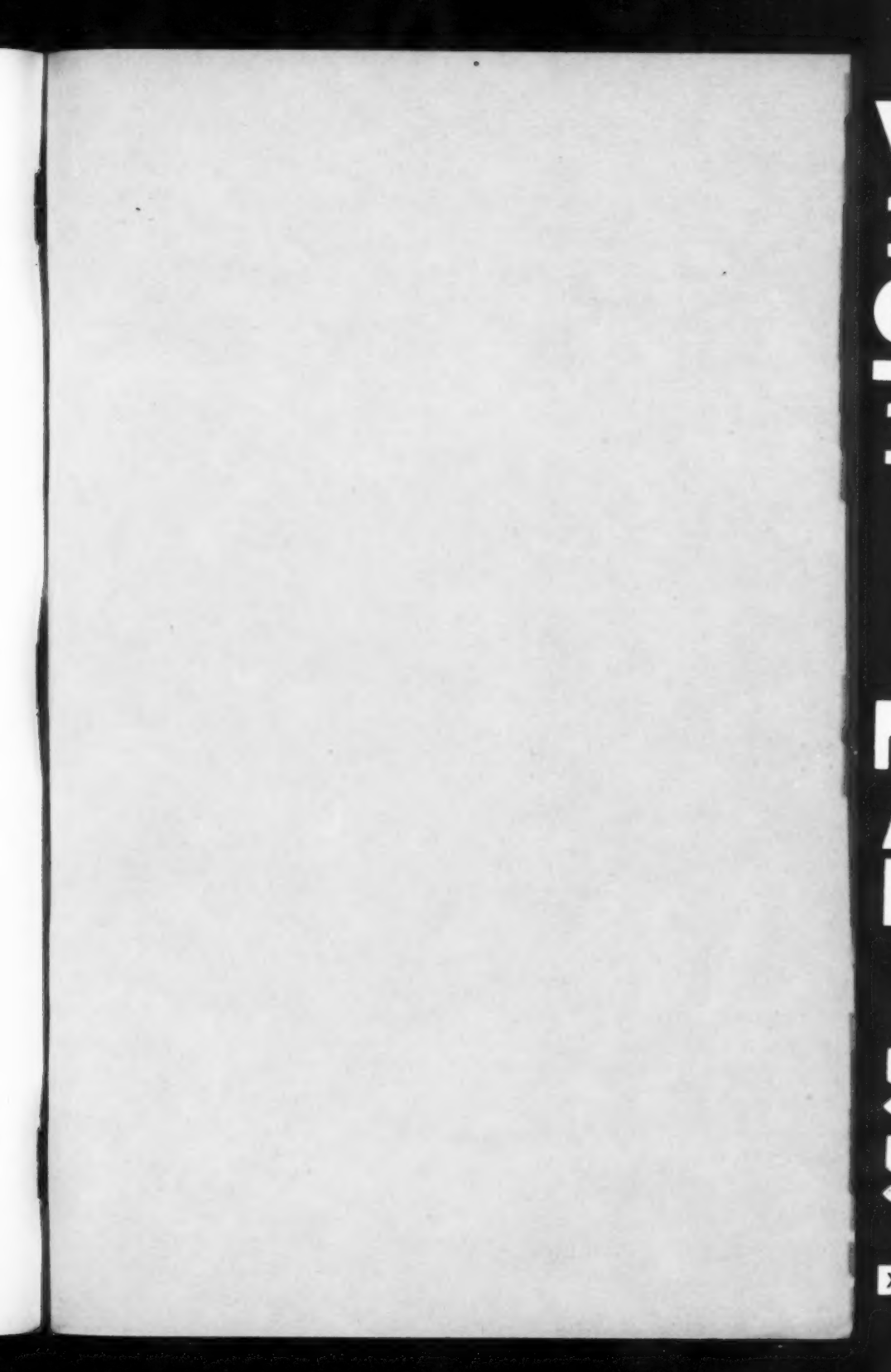
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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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The series will begin with works relating to China, Japan, and Korea. Later it is hoped that it will include documents from India, Burma, Thailand, and Malaya. Professor C. Martin Wilbur, associate editor, who will supervise the work, has already begun the search for translators.

